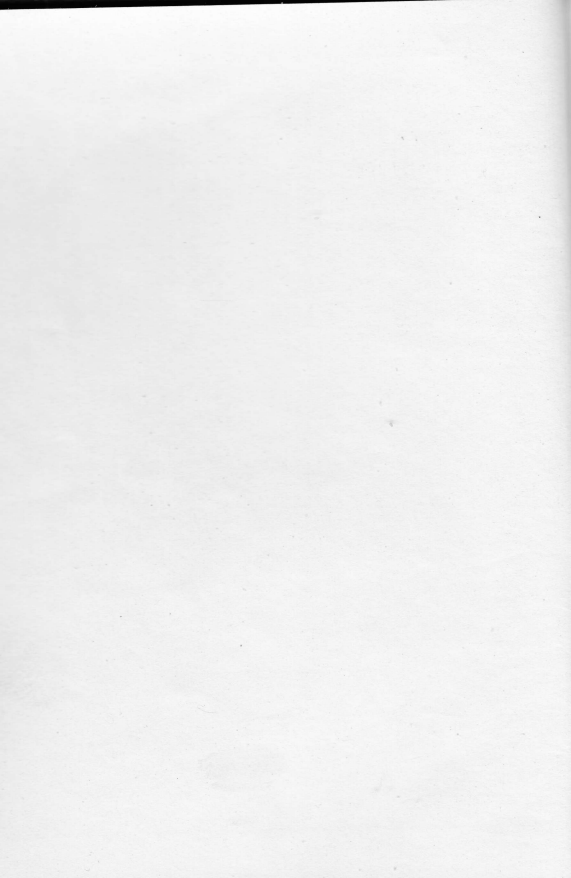


NAZARETH







NAZARETH

To Mary

From Maryn.

Loyola Retreat

5th July

1959.



NAZARETH

A BOOK OF COUNSEL AND PRAYER FOR
THE MARRIED

From the German of

DOM J. K. SCHEUBER, O.S.B.

Translated, adapted and enlarged by

THE VENERABLE ARCHDEACON

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DEDICATED

TO

THE HOLY FAMILY

JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH

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Except for the first chapter on Marriage, the sections dealing with the Training of a Mother and the Training of a Child, with occasional slight variations and adaptations here and there throughout the text, this work is, as far as possible, a faithful translation of the original.

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PREFACE

The original version of *Nazareth* dates far back and has been long out of print. It circulated far and wide in Germany and Switzerland. Its popularity amongst married women was unbounded. Some few years ago Dom J. K. Scheuber, O.S.B., discovered a copy carefully and lovingly preserved by an old miner's wife and at the request of Räber and Co., publishers in Lucerne, undertook to re-edit, revise and enlarge it.

His wide experience as preacher and *conférencier* had taught him that mothers, both young and middle aged, who have conceived a child, are grateful beyond measure for a word of counsel, of instruction and of prayer. They are particularly attracted by prayers proper to their condition and to the cares and anxieties that weigh upon them. During the period of bearing they have need of quietude, self-examination and reflection, and in their partial retirement have time, too, to consider what

the child after its birth will demand of them in care, in work and in responsibility. *Nazareth* will supply their needs.

I return my thanks to Messrs Räber and Co., for their kind permission to translate this unique book and to adapt it for the English speaking public. My gratitude is due to Messrs. M. H. Gill & Son of Dublin for allowing me to make use of their *Voice of the Church* and to the Catholic Truth Society of England for permitting me to quote from the pamphlet *The Pope Speaks to Mothers*.

May God grant that this book of counsel and prayer will promote devotion to the Holy Family and help Catholic homes reflect in ever growing measure the virtues that shone in the Home of Nazareth.

M. S. MACMAHON.

The Feast of the Holy Family, 1948.

NAZARETH



The Angel Gabriel was sent from God into a city of Galilee, called Nazareth ; to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David ; and the virgin's name was Mary.

And the Angel being come in, said unto her : Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee : blessed art thou among women. Who having heard, was troubled at his saying, and thought with herself what manner of salutation this should be. And the Angel said to her : Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found grace with God. Behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bring forth a son ; and thou shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the most High, and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne

of David his father : and he shall reign in the house of Jacob for ever. And of his kingdom there shall be no end.

And Mary said to the Angel : How shall this be done, because I know not man ? And the angel answering, said to her : The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the most High shall overshadow thee. And therefore also the Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And behold thy cousin Elizabeth, she also hath conceived a son in her old age : and this is the sixth month with her that is called barren. Because no word shall be impossible with God. And Mary said :

Behold the handmaid of the Lord,
Be it done to me
according to thy word.

(Luke i. 26-38.)

PART I MOTHERHOOD

of David his father and he shall be in the
land of Israel for ever. And of his kingdom there
shall be no end.

And Mary said to the angel, I will do
as thou sayest. I know not what I shall say,
for I have not seen thee, and thou art
not with me. And the angel answered her,
Saying, I am Gabriel, and I stand in the
presence of the Lord. And I have been
sent to thee, to say unto thee, and to
take of thee the words of the Lord.
And thou shalt be with child, and shalt
bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his
name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall
be called the Son of the Highest. And
shall reign over the house of David for
ever. And thou shalt be with child, and
shalt bring forth a son, and thou shalt
call his name JESUS. He shall be great,
and shall be called the Son of the Highest.
And shall reign over the house of David
for ever.



CHAPTER I

MARRIAGE

Marriage, says St. Paul, is "a great mystery"—much too great for the human mind to sound its utmost depths. It is a mystery even from the natural point of view. God might have created children as He created the angels—by one word. But in the order of His Divine Providence He willed that husband and wife should co-operate with Him in the begetting of children that the human race may be preserved and perpetuated. As soon as a child is conceived, God breathes a soul into it and makes it to His own image and likeness. Parents are sharers in the creative power of the omnipotent God. They give existence to what was not before and which would not be without them.

The mystery is far greater when we enter into the sphere of the supernatural. The child is born again of water and the Holy Ghost and becomes the child of God by adoption,

has Christ for its brother and heaven for its inheritance ; it becomes a member of the Mystical Body of Christ, of the Church. God, therefore, depends upon parents not merely for the propagation of mankind, but for the extension of His Kingdom upon earth and for the peopling of heaven with its saints. "Christian parents," says Pope Pius XI, "must also understand that they are destined not only to preserve and propagate the human race on earth, indeed not only to educate any kind of worshippers of the true God, but children, who are to become members of the Church of Christ, to raise up fellow-citizens of the saints and members of God's household, that the worshippers of God and our Saviour may daily increase."—(*Casti Connubii*).

Marriage is a sacrament like Holy Orders. Both follow the same aim, pursue the same ends, but in a different way—the increase, the propagation, the perfection of the Kingdom of God. "By the sacrament parents are, as it were, consecrated." They are the first teachers of the child in all that pertains to God ;

they have the duty of bringing the child to the Church as soon as possible ; they are the first helpers of the priest ; they are entrusted by the Church to be the first pastors of the child whom they instruct, training it on Christian lines, and whom it is their duty to bring to the Church for the reception of supernatural grace.

Greater still is the mystery and consequently the splendour and the glory of Catholic marriage when we read St. Paul's views upon it. Man and wife are married "in the Lord" (1 Cor. vii. 39). By Baptism they have become incorporated in the Mystical Body of Christ ; by Marriage they become consecrated members of the Body of Christ. What is true of Christ and His Church as a whole, that they form one Body of which Christ is the Head, is verified between two members of that Mystical Body. In Christian marriage the spouses become one flesh, one body, but in a far higher sense than in merely natural marriage. They become united by a supernatural bond to a higher supernatural unity, to a mystical person, just as Christ and

the Church form one mystical Person. They form a living cell in the Mystical Body. They are, as it were, a Church in miniature. They form an image, nay, a facsimile of the union of Christ and His Church. The husband represents Christ, the wife represents the Church and "let there always be, both, in him who commands and in her who obeys, a heaven-born love guiding both in their respective duties." (Pope Leo XIII—*Arcanum Divinae*.)

So real and so close is the comparison between the marriage union of husband and wife and the espousals between Christ and the Church that, to paraphrase St. Paul, "As Christ is Head of the Church, and the head is the saving of the body, so is the husband the head and the saving protector of his wife ; so, too, should she be subject to him as the Church to Christ. Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the Church and carried His love so far as love can go, by dying for His Church. A man in loving his wife loves himself, yea the flesh of his own body, and surely no man ever hated his own flesh. As

members of the Church, we are members of the Body of Christ, of His flesh and of His bones."¹

The husband is the head of the family—no society can live without a head—but he exercises his God-given power, as Christ rules over the Church, with ever-loving kindness and tender love. The husband rules as king, the wife reigns as queen. The husband is the head, the wife is the heart of the home. The wife sees Christ in her husband, the husband sees our Holy Mother the Church in his wife—no matter how blurred the image may be in each case—and their children become members of the Mystical Body of Christ.

How remote all this is from the prevailing modern conception of marriage! And yet it is God's thought of the marriage state. Marriage is not a matter of passion nor a romantic dream—though romance may enter into it—nor is it a mere escape from single life nor a desire for one's own home. It is a calling, a high vocation in which the married

¹ Rickaby, *Further Notes on St. Paul.* p. 46.

couple grow in holiness together, and through the duties and privileges of married life, which God has willed, tend, if duties and privileges be carried out as God wills, towards the perfection which God has destined for them.

THE EFFECTS OF THE SACRAMENT ¹

The Christian ideal of marriage is high. But God never imposes a duty without giving one the strength and the capacity to perform it. God never calls one to a vocation without enabling one to live up to it. On the wedding-day the bridal couple gain an increase of sanctifying grace which purifies, strengthens and consecrates their love. They themselves are the ministers of the sacrament, the priest serving only as an official witness of the Church to insure the validity and the lawfulness of the marriage; their souls are joined and knit together more immediately and intimately than are their bodies by a deliberate and firm act of the will and from that union of souls arises by God's decree a sacred and inviolable bond.

¹ Cf. *Wege zu Gott*, (Josef Beeking).

Besides sanctifying grace the bridal couple receive the right to sacramental graces upon which they can call at any moment of their married life to overcome the difficulties which are inevitable in all human relations, and to solve those special problems which necessarily arise from time to time.

The first special grace has the effect of making the love, from which every marriage springs, become more and more faithful—faithful unto death. A second grace secures that the spouses in the unfolding of their mutual love will never lose sight of the reverence they owe each other as adopted children of God, that in their intimate life they will never succumb to the demon of degradation and never lose themselves in the midst of uncontrolled passion. The third grace assists the married couple to fulfil the great task of promoting each other's sanctification and of discharging in persevering loyalty the duties of their parental priesthood in respect of their children. If, doing all in their power, they co-operate diligently with the wondrous graces of matrimony “they

will be able with ease," says Pope Pius XI, "to bear the burdens of their state and to fulfil their duties." Human nature unaided could not realise God's ideal of marriage, but, conscious of the graces to which they are entitled and for which they should pray, they can take heart of hope, in the words of St. Paul to the Philippians. "I can do all things in him who strengtheneth me."

CHAPTER II

THE CHILDLESS WIFE

A married couple may willingly and with perfect mutual agreement renounce, on supernatural grounds, the joys of marriage and offer to God a pure, perfectly continent marriage like the so-called "Joseph marriage." Such a couple ought to be prepared to render God and mankind some useful service. To the wife of such a marriage may be applied the words of our Blessed Lady, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord."

CHILDLESS THROUGH SELFISHNESS

There are other married couples who for purely material reasons—through selfishness or love of ease, love of pleasure, through cowardice and faint-heartedness—do not want a child, or make up their minds to have only a very small family while at the same time they will not observe continence or holy chastity. They cannot be happy; for the guilty husband treats his wife no better than a harlot and a guilty wife lowers her husband to the role of paramour. Their home instead of being an outpost of heaven becomes a portico of hell.

LONGING FOR A CHILD

Other women long for children and pray for the blessing of a child but remain childless for years or for ever. A wife's longing to become a mother is in perfect accordance with God's law and ordinance in the Sacrament of Matrimony: "Increase and multiply and people the earth" (Gen. i. 28). If the gift of a child be not vouchsafed there should be no

murmuring and complaint against God, no unhappiness, discontent or despair; "Father, not my will but thine be done." This prayer of the Saviour in agony is associated with the prayer of the humble Virgin Mary: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord. Be it done unto me according to thy word."

The Church blesses the young bride and wishes her numerous children as gifts of God. *"Let her be fruitful in offspring. Let her life be good and sinless; may they both see their children's children unto the third and fourth generation and may they reach the old age which they desire."*

If a marriage be childless for a shorter or longer time, husband and wife, and not the wife only, should pray that God may bless their union with offspring. When the Angel came to the aged Zacharias he made express reference to his prayers: "For thy prayer is heard and thy wife Elizabeth shall bear a son. . . . And thou shalt have joy and gladness and many shall rejoice in his nativity" (Luke i. 13-14).

God often tries good married couples by

weary waiting. Courage, confidence and abandonment to God's will, will adorn the way of longing. What a glad message, what a loving reward for persevering prayer, is the news the Angel gave to Our Lady : " And behold thy cousin Elizabeth, she also hath conceived a son in her old age ; and this is the sixth month with her that is called barren, because no word shall be impossible with God " (Luke i. 36-7).

Pious couples will have their prayer strengthened by paying special kindness to poor children, by the adoption of an orphan ; by providing for or helping an abnormal child, a delicate or sick one ; by subscribing to the Holy Childhood Society for the conversion of pagan children ; by giving alms to an orphanage or by similar acts of charity that will strengthen their petition before the throne of God. Has not the divine Friend of children said : " whosoever shall receive one such child as this in my name receiveth me " (Mark ix. 36).

CHILDLESS THROUGH GOD'S WILL

Should it be God's will that the earnest prayers be not answered, consolation will be found in the following considerations :

What God does is always well done, whether we understand it or not.

Perhaps God in His Providence is preparing two people for another great task. A childless wife can be also a handmaid of the Lord. She must struggle hard and pray fervently for nobility and magnanimity of soul.

May not the Ruler of all things demand the sacrifice of being childless from many women as an atonement for the sins of those, who harden their hearts against child-bearing or kill the child on its way to the light of day ?

All care and sorrow for a child, whether children come in numbers or come not at all, should be shot through with the Christian belief that God allots vocation, positions, ways of living and the crosses of life in His wise Providence and that He makes each one of us capable of fulfilling the appointed task.

The householder gave to one servant five

talents, to another, two, to another only one. Who trades with one will be called "a faithful servant." To that one the crown of eternal life is promised.

THE COMING OF CHILDREN

More frequent and more intense than the complaint of having no children are the dejection and discontent of those mothers who have given birth to many children. It is not hard to understand that the care for the health and life of the children, the anxiety about food, clothing and housing, the anxiety over the employment and the earnings of the father, over the future occupation and welfare of the children, weigh heavily on the heart of a conscientious mother. Bad times may even lead to something like despair.

God knew of all those troubles when he instituted marriage. The decree to "increase and multiply" was given to our first parents in their state of happiness in the garden of Paradise. Pain and sorrow are the punishments for the sin in which we all have shared in Adam and Eve. God said to the woman :

“ I will multiply thy sorrows and conceptions. In sorrow thou shalt bring forth children and thou shalt be under thy husband’s power ” (Gen. iii. 16).

BIRTH-CONTROL AND ABORTION

One must strongly urge a married couple, who are well fitted for the task, to desire to have children. The number of married women, who, from real cowardice, utter selfishness, total reluctance to endure discomfort, from over-anxiety and lack of the sense of duty renounce child-bearing, nay, extinguish by violence the “ light of life ” in the child they are bearing—their married life being burdened with sin after sin—has become so great in some countries that a whole people healthy in themselves, may gradually die out through a social evil that spreads like a cancer through the body politic. The root of the evil is lack of faith in God, and want of confidence in Divine Providence. Giving birth to a child is a natural operation, unattended by danger in nineteen cases out of twenty. The great progress that has been

made in medicine, in surgery and in midwifery, reduces almost to nothing in normal cases the fears and anxieties over the mother's health.

The Catholic woman must not be led astray by the maxims of the world or the perverse views of her women friends, which aim at the triumph of voluntary infertility over fertile love. She must act according to the law of God and the voice of conscience. What Tobias said to his bride holds for every Catholic married pair: "For we are the children of saints and we must not be joined like heathens that know not God" (Tobias viii. 5). St. Paul gives like direction to St. Timothy for the instruction of young Christian women: "I will, therefore, that the younger should marry, bear children, be mistresses of families, give no occasion to the adversary to speak evil" (1 Tim. v).

Good mothers, who have given birth to many children, glory in the number of their offspring, for they believe that "to be blessed with children is to be blessed by God." "So many children so many Our Fathers." "With

every child a new Guardian Angel comes and we cannot have too many Guardian Angels in a home." "God gives, God provides." "Every child brings its loaf of bread with it."

Thoughts such as these help them go on their way rejoicing.

THE BLESSING OF LARGE FAMILIES

Sunshine and love, laughter and life, joy and gladness fill a room in which a dozen hands stretch out to greet the father of a family, in which a dozen eyes gaze on the mother lovingly, in which a whole rosary of "Hail Marys" close the blessed day. The children of large families bring up one another, prepare one another for the battle of life, ease the burden on their parents by helping one another, by correcting faults and developing virtues.

The Church, of course, knows that many families are hard hit by bitter necessity, by lack of means, by want of room, by threats of eviction, by high prices. But it is also true that Church and State and charitable associa-

tions in diverse ways come to their rescue in due measure and at opportune time. It is no shame to ask and to receive such benefits.

PRACTICE OF THRIFT

Many a family's hardships would be overcome did the mother learn to be thrifty, to be a good housewife, to cook, to mend, to manage well. It is no disgrace to begin to learn after marriage things that should have been known long before.

SACRIFICE : A NECESSITY

That fathers and mothers must make many great sacrifices through love of their children is a duty of family life. Those very sacrifices, renunciations, economies and privations knit closer the bonds of family love. On to mature age they unite in trust and gratitude the hearts of child and parent.

Four factors build up the happy home : union with God, chastity, love and fidelity. Should one of these be wanting the whole structure collapses. In the sheltered paradise

of a home fertility is the source of happiness. The bodily fruit of married love is the child ; acts of virtue and perfection produce the spiritual fruits. Both fruits together cannot but conduce to happiness in marriage.

A country that is rich in children is rich indeed. Children are riches for the parents. Jesus Christ has gone the way of childhood. In the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary, His mother, He began His work of redemption. It is a deordination and against Nature itself, if the love of children is torn out from and killed in the hearts of young men and women.

HOW MANY CHILDREN

To the oft-recurring question "*How many children should a Christian married couple have?*" Bishop Francis von Streng gives the answer "Good Christian parents give willingly to God, to the Church and to the nation as many children as is consistent with the health of the parents, their economic condition, their social standing and their opportunity of rearing them. When all due consideration is paid to health, property, economic status, housing,

standard of living on one side, the Bishop emphasises, on the other side, the need of leading a simple life, of practising thrift, of being content with little. Pope Pius XI said that what ruins families is love of self, love of ease, love of high living, love of money, over-indulgence in pleasure and all forms of amusement.

WHEN CONTINENCE IS IMPERATIVE

If a married couple honestly feel and conscientiously determine that they should have no more children, both the law of Nature and the precepts of morality imperatively demand one thing from them, namely, continence. It may be observed by mutual agreement for a limited period of time or for their whole lifetime. It is permitted on reasonable grounds. Such continence is a blessing for soul and body. It intensifies true marital love and proves salutary for the children they already possess. With good will it is possible to observe it; in certain circumstances it is a duty to practise it.

THE EVIL TO BE AVOIDED

One evil must be avoided, come what may: mortal sin must never enter into their married life. No misfortune that can possibly befall them—poverty, suffering, death—can be compared to the awful darkness that overhangs the nuptial bed in which God's law is outraged. God loves us all. None of us is tried beyond enduring. One is never tempted beyond one's strength. With God we can bear all things.

PERIODIC CONTINENCE

(The Safe Period or 'Time Choice')

Pope Pius XI in his Encyclical *Casti Connubii* states, "Nor are those considered as acting against nature who, in the married state, use their right in the proper manner, although on account of natural reasons of time or of certain defects new life cannot be brought forth."

The married couple who take advantage of the so-called "safe period," needless to add,

are bound to welcome any children that may come, and to rear them ; for the taking advantage of these days that are declared physiologically sterile does not necessarily exclude the possibility of conception.

Vermeersch, a great modern authority on the moral law, writes, " In itself indifferent or objectively good this limitation (the use of marriage within the safe period only), which is not a violation of nature, may, according to the circumstances and the intention, be praiseworthy, less desirable, or even worthy of blame."

The justifying circumstances are to be carefully considered and the intention must be upright and in perfect conformity with the designs of Divine Providence. The " time choice " must never be directed by an absolute and constant will never to beget a child.

The happiness of a Christian family depends upon a twofold good will : on one side is the *will for a child*, the love for a large family, the desire for bodily fertility ; on the other side is the *will for continence*, the love of chastity, the willingness for spiritual fecundity. The

will for the child and the will for continence should supplement, relieve and balance one another according to the end and aim of marriage and in fulfilment of the laws of God.

THOU SHALT NOT KILL

Special attention must be paid by a married couple to the fifth commandment, "Thou shalt not kill." The unborn child is an independent human life and has the same right to protection as the born child. The life of the mother and of the child are equivalent. Each has the same right to live. The child has an immortal soul and is entitled to Baptism. Neither father nor mother, nor doctor nor the State has the right to pass sentence of death upon an unborn child. God alone is master of life and of death. His Providence can work all things, even the most improbable, unto good.

Mothers are greatest in their trust in God and in the willingness to endure sacrifice.

CHAPTER III MOTHERHOOD

Wondrous, great and noble is the dignity of sharing in the creative power of the Almighty God and preparing a child's way into the world. During the nine months in which the child grows mysteriously in her womb the mother should often reflect on the dignity that has been conferred upon her. She will also give anxious thought to the responsibility that comes with each new child. Short ejaculatory prayers should be constantly on her lips, such as :—" Dear Lord, grant that my child be good ! " " Grant it become a saint ! " The holiness of great saints has often begun in their mother's womb. The dispositions and characteristics of the parents are not without exercising a great influence on the physical and moral qualities of the child.

AFTER CONCEPTION

As soon as a Christian wife knows that she is pregnant she should thank God with all her heart. Our Blessed Lady did so in the noble

words of the *Magnificat*, "He that is mighty hath done great things to me and holy is his name. And his mercy is from generation unto generation" (Luke i. 49-50). The mother should commend the child to God every day. It is He alone Who maintains and protects the child in her womb and promotes development therein until the moment comes when the child is to be born into the light of day. Confidence in Mary, Mother most powerful, and prayer to the Guardian Angel of the child are good companions during the time of bearing and of expectation.

CARE OF SOUL AND BODY

Special care should be taken during this time to live in the grace of God and to practise those domestic and social virtues which make a woman shine before God and man : love and kindness, patience and gentleness, almsgiving, fraternal charity and readiness in helping poor and large families to pass through the recurring times of pain and distress with the least possible anxiety. God sets great store on unselfish love.

It goes without saying that a mother in this condition should pay special care to her bodily health. She should avoid everything in food, drink, dress, work, sport that might be harmful to her child. This self-restraint entails many a sacrifice but a mother's love is equal to any task. How poor and how insignificant must earthly pleasure seem compared to the wonder that is hers! Much deeper and hitherto undreamt of joys spring up in her heart when she hears within her the heart-beat of her own child. Now she understands the words with which the women in the crowd greeted our Lord "Blessed is the womb that bore thee and the paps that gave thee suck" (Luke xi. 27). Christ endorsed the word of praise "Blessed," but He transformed and exalted it. "Yea rather blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it." On that, too, a mother should reflect.

Doctors earnestly impress on mothers the necessity of controlling their emotions, outbursts of anger, hatred, irritation and temper. The mother will guard the child from the evil arising from such outbursts with the

same care as she will guard it from the danger arising from accidents to herself, such as falling on the ground, exposing herself to excessive heat or cold, or over-straining herself.

SUFFERINGS' REWARD

Indeed, no mother can escape the hardships, the pains and the sacrifices her pregnancy involves. They are a fulfilment of the threat of punishment uttered by God: "I will multiply thy sorrows and thy conceptions. In sorrow thou shalt bring forth children" (Gen. iii. 16). The Christian mother knows that in her pain she shares in bringing about the reconciliation of the world with God, just as our Blessed Lady did when she stood at the foot of the Cross uniting herself with the sacrifice of her divine Son. She knows, too, that her pains and sufferings help her to win her heavenly crown; for in this way of suffering she fulfils the special task which God has laid upon woman. "She shall be saved through childbearing; if she continue in faith and love and sanctification with sobriety" (1 Tim. ii. 15).

She is also aware that the joys that follow upon the happy birth of the child outweigh a hundredfold the pains she suffers, as Our Divine Lord Himself has so feelingly declared : "A woman when she is in labour hath sorrow, because her hour is come : but when she hath brought forth the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world" (John xxii. 21).

When a mother has reason to feel special anxiety about the birth of the child she is bearing, she should consult a skilled Catholic doctor. He will be able to give her trustworthy advice and help in most cases to allay her fears.

DEVOTIONAL PRACTICES

A practice not unusual in some Continental regions will surely prove helpful and inspire great confidence. When the mother has sufficient means she gets three Masses said in honour of the birth of Our Lord, of Our Blessed Lady and of St. John the Baptist. The fruits of these Masses are applied to the souls of those mothers who have died in childbirth. A very old custom is to light three candles in

honour of the Blessed Trinity in the home or in the Church. As special patrons of a happy birth are counted St. Anne who conceived her child, Mary, the Mother of God, without stain of original sin and gave birth to her amid the jubilation of the Angels ; St. Elizabeth whose child was sanctified in her womb ; St. Aloysius and St. Gebhard who, by a special favour of God, were both saved at the moment of birth from certain death and who have proved of great assistance to many mothers in times of great crisis.

In the inscrutable counsels of God it happens now and again that a mother's life is sacrificed in childbirth. Every Christian mother should be prepared for such possible contingency. She should set her spiritual and temporal affairs in order, go to Confession and receive Holy Communion. She may then banish care and anxiety from her heart and give herself entirely to the will of Almighty God.

When labour sets in, let the mother hold a little crucifix in her hand, think of the sufferings of the Son of God, Our Lord, Who was crucified for us and in indescribable pain

spiritually brought forth mankind to a new birth. In patience and abandonment of herself to God she will endure her pains. "Priests and mothers are at their sublimest when they are offering up sacrifice." Both are guardians of a holy chalice ; both work the wonder of a transformation in the power of Almighty God.

THE CHILD IS BORN

An indescribable happiness fills a mother's heart when she holds her newborn child for the first time in her arms. What longing and hoping, what anxiety and doubt have preceded that happy moment ! Now pain is forgotten and all anguish past.

This blessed moment, when mother and child meet, should never be allowed to pass without a fervent prayer of thanksgiving to God. How beautiful it is to see the weak mother hand the child into its father's arms and to hear him give thanks to the mother, though every child brings new responsibility to the mother and fresh anxieties to the father.

BAPTISM OF A CHILD

The first and most necessary care should be to provide for the baptism of the child. The interval between the birth and Baptism should not extend beyond a week, two or three days interval should suffice in normal cases. If the child be very delicate or if, at the birth, danger of death ensue, then baptism should be administered immediately.

The child should be brought, if at all convenient, to the parish church of its parents. Difficulties frequently arise when this is not done. No one may remember, in later years, the nursing home in which the child was born, or the parish church in which it was baptised. Precautions are prescribed to avoid this danger, but they may not be always carried out through accident or otherwise. As the mother can rarely be at her child's baptism it would be useful and helpful for her to read the prayer (on p. 76) while the ceremony is going on.

CHILD'S NAME

The parents should prepare all the preliminaries of the baptismal ceremony—the choice of name, the selection of good Catholic godparents and give timely notice to their parish priest. The right to choose the name rests with the parents. They should choose the name of a saint on the Catholic calendar. Consistent with that the child is often called after either of its parents or grandparents or other relatives, some christian names being common by sound tradition to the same family for generations. It is considered by some a better practice not to shorten the Christian name of the child or call it by a pet name, out of respect, perhaps, for the patron saint after whom it is called. It is an excellent custom for the mother to commend her child regularly to the patron saint she has chosen for it.

CHURCHING OF A MOTHER

As soon as the mother is well enough to go to the church she should ask to be churchied. **The ceremony is one of thanksgiving for having been blessed with a child (see page 92) and**

the practice is a following of the example of Our Blessed Lady who, forty days after the birth of Jesus, went to the temple.

FEEDING AT THE BREAST¹

It should be a duty of love on the mother's part to nourish her child at her breast. God the Creator has so ordained in His infinite wisdom that the mother's milk is the most perfect nourishment a child can receive. This natural food should not be denied the child through mere caprice, objection to any discomfort or want of the spirit of self-denial. We call Mary, the Mother of God "blessed," not merely because she bore the Infant Jesus in her womb, but also because she gave Him His first nourishment at her breast. For that reason did the woman in the Gospel cry out to Jesus, "Blessed is the womb that bore thee and the paps that gave thee suck" (Luke xi.

¹ "Except where it is quite impossible, it is most desirable that the mother should feed her child at her own breast. Who shall say what mysterious influences are exerted upon the growth of that little creature by the mother upon whom it depends entirely for its development" (Pope Pius XII—*The Pope speaks to mothers*).

27). A normally healthy mother should nourish her own child ; nor should doctors give contrary advice unless for grave reasons of health. The mother's milk contains all that is best for a child's development. With every sacrifice a mother makes for a child, with every inconvenience she bravely suffers for its sake, the heartstrings of mother and child are more closely entwined. The child drinks in love with its mother's milk and every pressure of its lips expands the mother's heart to deeper love. The love that is thus created and manifested is enduring. It lasts through life and beyond the grave to the mystery of eternity.

CHILD'S PRAYERS

The first prayer should be a daily prayer for the child. But soon the mother should pray with the child. She will do this long before the child understands or speaks a word. The praying mother with the child at her bosom is the prototype of all educators. A mother who prays with her child in her arms penetrates deeply into the mysteries of God. She sees in her child a masterpiece of the

Almighty Creator and becomes aware of the wonder of a child's soul. From this connection a mother acquires that heroic courage and strength which she needs for the willing acceptance of every new care and burden, and which enable her to give without complaint, to develop, to awaken, to protect it and to suffer patiently.

REVERENCE

All education may be summarised in one word—Reverence. Education to reverence begins with infancy. The first approach to reverence a child experiences is reverence for father and mother which can only be, when parents excite reverence by blameless conduct. From the authority of its parents the child acquires reverence for God. The fear of God becomes for it the beginning of all virtues, if it finds it reflected in the religious practices and spiritual life of its parents. Closely related to this is reverence for the priest and the teacher, for one's neighbours and for the whole community.

In like measure there is developed respect

for the truth of one's spoken, written and plighted word. Woe to the child who hears its mother tell a lie ! Reverence for the name, the property, the reputation of one's neighbour awakens in the young a sense of honour and of honesty, the natural fruit of which is reverence for the body and for life.

And thus the growing, thinking child soon discovers that the commandments of God are but a protection for all that is sacred and for all that one should hold in respect and esteem, viz. God, the Name of God, the Sunday, Parents, Family Life, the Body, Property and possessions, honour or truth. It is only those who possess the virtue of reverence that grow into useful and model members of society. They become a credit and an honour to their parish, their Church, their community, their State, their family, their avocation.

How holy is the office of a mother which can awaken, develop and strengthen these powers. The greatest people are those who possess the best mothers.

In the home must begin,
All that makes a nation great.

PART II

THE CHILD CONCEIVED

THE CANTICLE OF LOVE

*Charity is patient, is kind : charity envieth not,
dealeth not perversely : is not puffed up,*

*Is not ambitious, seeketh not her own, is not
provoked to anger, thinketh no evil :*

*Rejoiceth not in iniquity but rejoiceth with the
truth :*

*Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth
all things, endureth all things.*

*Charity never falleth away : whether prophecies
shall be made void, or tongues shall cease, or
knowledge shall be destroyed.*

I Cor. xiii. 4-8.]

PRAYER FOR THE BLESSING OF A CONCEPTION

Our Father Who art in heaven ! Thou hast instituted and consecrated the marriage state that the human race may be preserved on earth according to Thy decree : "Increase and multiply and fill the earth." Thou hast called me to this holy state and to Thy call I gave my word of consent on my wedding-day.

Almighty God, I beg of Thee that, through the merits and through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, and her holy mother, St. Anne, Thou wilt bless our marriage with children. Look down, O Father in heaven, upon our anxious longing and give Thy blessing to our earnest prayer. In deep gratitude I shall regard every child, which Thou wilt bless me with, as a gift of Thy great goodness and I shall bring them all up in Thy service in order that Thy Holy Name may be praised from generation unto generation and be glorified for all eternity. Amen.

THANKSGIVING OF A WIFE WHO HAS CONCEIVED

Loving Father in heaven ! Thou hast, in Thy great love, entrusted a child to me ; I bear it under my heart ; I must guard and nourish it as Mary, the ever-blessed Virgin Mother, nourished Thy only-begotten Son and brought Him forth into the world. Praise and thanksgiving be to Thee, O loving God, for the precious gift with which Thou hast blessed our love. I pray Thee to preserve and protect this tender little life, that my child may see the light of the world and receive the grace of Baptism. Give me the power and virtue to be a good mother. Give my dear husband all the grace he needs to support and look after his family. Give us both the spirit of patience and of sacrifice in the time of expectation, that we may be worthy co-operators with Thee in the holy formation of life.

Holy Mary, Mother of God, to thee I consecrate the child which begins to live under my heart. Take it under thy special care ; spread thy maternal mantle over its whole future. Commend it to Christ, Thy Son, that

it may snare by holy Baptism in the grace of His Redemption and become a child of God for all eternity.

DAILY PRAYER FOR THE COMING CHILD

Almighty God, the Author of life ! guard, protect and bless the young life which Thou hast awakened in me. Protect me also from all dangers of body and soul and give me the joy of happily bringing forth a healthy child to the light of the world. Accept all the pains and troubles I may feel this day as a thanksgiving offering for the loving kindness, which Thou, O my God, hast shown me. Grant to my child the grace of Baptism. Give my child the faith and strength of soul to devote to Thy holy service all the sacrifices of a long life. Through Jesus Christ Thy Son. Amen.

BLESS US, O LORD

During the pregnancy, with which she has been blessed, the mother in accordance with a beautiful custom would do well to bless herself with holy water every day and in that blessing include the child she is bearing.

In some districts the father blesses both mother and child with the sign of the Cross saying :

“May God the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost bless you and the fruit of your womb. Praise be to Jesus Christ, for ever. Amen.”

NOVENA FOR A HAPPY DELIVERY

Whenever a mother is anxious about her confinement she should prepare for her delivery, not merely by consulting her doctor, but above all by fervent prayer. She may make this novena by herself, or with her husband and her grown-up children, before a crucifix or an image of Our Blessed Lady.

Jesus Christ, Son of the Blessed Virgin Mary, God and Man and our Redeemer, I come in deep anxiety to implore Thy assistance. By the Blood Thou didst shed for us upon the Cross and through the intercession of Thy beloved Mother, Mary, grant me this favour, that the child who is to be born of my blood and life, will come happy, healthy and strong into the world and that I may get over the

difficult time safe and sound and thus be preserved a careful mother to my family.

I ask this favour, O Jesus, through the love which Thou has felt for Thy dearest Mother ; through all the sufferings which Thy mother has endured with Thee and for Thee ; through the seven-edged sword of sorrow which pierced her tender heart. For Thy mother's sake, O Lord, hear my prayer.

I ask thee, O Mary, so afflicted with sorrow and so loving of heart, to bring my tribulation before thy Son, Who has never refused a request of thine. Pray for me, O Holy Mother of God, that I may become after thy model a valiant wife and mother ready to accept every sacrifice.

Here say nine "Hail Marys" and add the following prayer :

Glory be to the Father, Who has chosen thee for His daughter ; glory be to the Son, Who has chosen thee for His Mother ; glory be to the Holy Ghost Who has chosen thee for His Spouse. As it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

PRAYER TO JESUS ON THE CROSS FOR HELP IN
THE PAINFUL HOUR OF CHILDBIRTH

O crucified Saviour, Jesus Christ, soon the time of delivery will be at hand ; I feel anguish and fear come over me. I fly to Thy protection, my Saviour on the blood-stained Cross. By Thy most holy sufferings, help and protect me in this hard hour. Remember, O Lord, how in the garden of Gethsemane Thy human nature did shudder at the prospect of Thy impending sufferings ; how Thou didst sweat blood and beg for relief from Thy heavenly Father. Behold, I tremble before the pains, which may await me, before the danger which may cost me my life.

O Lord Jesus Christ, as Thou didst raise Thy eyes to Thy Father in the hour of Thy bitter suffering, so I cast mine upon Thy holy Cross and beseech Thee to help me, O my suffering Lord. After three hours of agony Thou didst cry out " My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me," I will cry out to Thee, " Abandon me not. Have pity on my helplessness, O my Saviour." On the wood of

the Cross Thou hast, by atoning for our guilt, brought us forth again to eternal life. By the sin of our first parents we were dead to God, by the sacrifice of the Cross Thou hast given us life in God.

By Thy Cross and Passion I earnestly beseech Thee that no more suffering will come on me, Thy poor handmaid, than my poor strength can bear. I place all my pains in Thy five wounds; and I commend to Thee myself and my child. Protect us both and guard us against the danger of death. After a safe delivery let me and my child never forget that in the Cross is salvation for the whole world; for it is through Thy holy Cross that Thou hast redeemed the world. Let Thy Cross and Thy suffering be not lost on my poor soul.

PRAYER AT THE POINT OF BIRTH

Merciful God, who carest for the birds of the air and the lilies of the field, forget not the suffering which it is Thy will I should endure. Bless the fruit of my womb. Be beside me

in the difficult hour of childbirth. Give me courage and strength to bear patiently the pains all mothers must endure on account of the sin of our first parents. By Thy merciful Providence, through the intercession of Thy most sorrowful Mother Mary and by all my own sufferings, which I patiently offer up to Thee, give my child a happy birth ; give it the grace of holy Baptism and Thy paternal love for all eternity ; grant us this grace through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Thy mother, who bore Thy Son, Jesus Christ, in her virginal womb for nine months and brought Him forth without pang of pain. Amen.

STABAT MATER

At the Cross, her station keeping,
Stood the mournful Mother weeping.
Close to Jesus to the last,
Through her heart His sorrow sharing,
All his bitter anguish bearing,
Now at length the sword has passed.

Oh, how sad and sore distressed.
Was that Mother highly blest,
Of the sole-begotten One !
Christ above in torment hangs ;
She beneath beholds the pangs
Of her dying glorious Son.

Is there one who would not weep,
Whelm'd in miseries so deep,
Christ's dear Mother to behold ?
Can the human heart refrain
From partaking in her pain,
In that Mother's pain untold ?

Bruised, derided, cursed, defiled,
She beheld her tender Child,
All with bloody scourges rent ;
For the sins of His own nation,
Saw Him hang in desolation,
Till His spirit forth he sent.

O thou Mother ! fount of love ;
Touch my spirit from above ;
Make my heart with thine accord ;

Make me feel as thou hast felt ;
Make my soul to glow and melt
With the love of Christ, My Lord.

Holy Mother ! pierce me through ;
In my heart each wound renew
Of my Saviour crucified.
Let me share with thee His pain.
Who for all my sins was slain
Who for me in torment died.

Let me mingle tears with thee,
Mourning Him who mourned for me,
All the days that I may live :
By the cross with thee to stay ;
There with thee to weep and pray,
Is all I ask of thee to give.

Virgin of all virgins best !
Listen to my fond request,
Let me share thy grief divine ;
Let me, to my latest breath,
In my body bear the death
Of that dying Son of thine.

Wounded with His every wound,
Steep my soul till it hath swooned
In His very blood away ;
Be to me, O Virgin, nigh,
Lest in flames I burn and die,
In His awful judgment-day.

Christ, when Thou shalt call me hence,
Be Thy Mother my defence,
Be Thy cross my victory ;
While my body here decays,
May my soul Thy goodness praise,
Safe in paradise with Thee. Amen.

(Indulgences: Seven years. Plenary: under usual conditions, once a month, if said each day for whole month.)

THE CHURCH BLESSES MOTHER AND CHILD

Since the Catholic Church has a special blessing for the expectant mother and the child about to come, all such mothers should be exhorted to receive this blessing with thankfulness. The mother can ask any priest to give her this blessing. She, however, manifests her parochial sense when she asks this blessing and all the other blessings of the home,

the child and the family from her Parish Priest or one of the curates. Priest and mother—or priest and acolyte—pray alternately.

℣. Our help is in the name of the Lord.

℟. Who made heaven and earth.

℣. Save Thy handmaid, O Lord.

℟. Who hopes in Thee, O My God.

℣. Be unto her, O Lord, a tower of strength.

℟. From the face of the enemy.

℣. May the enemy have no advantage over her.

℟. Nor the son of iniquity have power to hurt her.

℣. Send her help, O Lord, from Thy holy place.

℟. And from Sion protect her.

℣. O Lord, hear my prayer.

℟. And let my cry come unto Thee.

Let us pray.

Almighty, Everlasting God, Who hast given to Thy servants, in the confession of the True Faith, to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity, and, in the power of majesty, to adore the Unity ; grant, we beseech Thee, that, by

steadfastness in the same Faith, this Thine handmaid may ever be defended against all adversities. Through Our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who with Thee and the same Holy Spirit liveth and reigneth one God.

V. For ever and ever.

Ry. Amen.

Let us Pray

Lord God, Creator of all things, strong and awe-inspiring, just and merciful, Who alone art good and kind ; Who deliveredst Israel from all evil ; Who madest our fathers Thy beloved and didst sanctify them by the power of Thy Spirit ; Who by the co-operation of the Holy Spirit, didst prepare the body and soul of the glorious Virgin Mary, that she might be worthy to be made a fitting habitation of Thy Son ; Who madest John the Baptist to be filled with the Holy Spirit, and to leap in his mother's womb : accept the sacrifice of a contrite heart, and the fervent desire of Thine handmaid, N., who humbly prays to Thee for the preservation of the offspring which Thou hast given her to conceive ; guard her

who is Thine, and defend her from all deceit and all attack by Satan ; that, by the helping hand of Thy mercy, her offspring may come prosperously to light and may be preserved for holy regeneration, may ever serve Thee in all things and may merit to attain life everlasting. Through the same Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the same Holy Ghost, God, world without end.

R/. Amen.

The Priest then sprinkles holy water on the woman, and says :

Ps. lxvi.—Deus misereatur nostri

God be merciful unto us, and bless us ; cause the light of His countenance to shine upon us, and have mercy on us.

That we may know Thy way upon earth : Thy salvation in all nations.

Let the people praise Thee, O God : let all the people praise Thee.

O let the nations be glad and rejoice : for Thou dost judge the people with justice, and govern the nations upon earth.

Let the people praise Thee, O God : let all the people praise Thee.

O let the nations be glad and rejoice : for Thou dost judge the people with justice, and govern the nations upon earth.

Let the people praise Thee, O God : let all the people praise Thee : the earth hath yielded her fruit.

May God, even our own God, bless us : and may all the ends of the earth fear Him.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost. Amen.

℣. Let us bless the Father, and the Son, with the Holy Spirit.

℞. To keep thee in all thy ways.

℣. O Lord, hear my prayer.

℞. And let my cry come unto Thee.

℣. The Lord be with you.

℞. And with thy spirit.

Let us Pray

Visit, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy habitation, and drive all dangers far from it and from this Thy handmaid ; let Thy holy angels dwell therein, who may keep her and her

offspring in peace ; and let Thy blessing be always upon her. Save them, O Almighty God, and grant them Thy perpetual light. Through Our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who with Thee and the same Holy Spirit liveth and reigneth one God.

℣. For ever and ever.

℟. Amen.

May the blessing of Almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, descend upon thee and upon thy offspring and abide for ever.

℟. Amen.

PRAYER FOR COURAGE AT THE TIME OF CHILDBIRTH

My Lord and my God, the difficult hour is near. Joy and jubilation, thanksgiving and confidence fill my heart. But, as well, anxiety and anguish fill my soul. In Thy Hand, O my God, it lies whether I shall happily survive the birth of my child or whether Thou wilt exact from me the sacrifice of my life or the life of my child.

My Lord and my God, as Thy humble

handmaid I surrender myself entirely to Thy holy Will. If it be Thy Will, assist me in that difficult hour and preserve my child and myself in sound and healthy life. Let both our lives be lived everlastingly in Thy praise. Shouldst Thou demand the heavy sacrifice from me, give me strength, O Lord, to be brave and resigned to Thy holy Will; teach me to pray as Thy suffering Son, Jesus Christ, prayed at Gethsemane: "Father, not mine, but Thy Will be done." One only thing I ask of Thee, then my God: Have mercy on my poor soul. Accept all the pains of my motherhood. I offer them in atonement for my sins and as an entreaty for my dearest ones, whom to leave would be to me the hardest sacrifice of all. O Mary, my Mother, in my difficult hour commend me at the throne of God to the paternal care of Divine Providence. Console me and mine in sacrifice and suffering, if God should demand such trials of us. O Mary, always ready for every sacrifice, obtain for me grace to say with deep devotion, "My Lord and my God, take me from myself and give me to Thyself entirely." One prayer

I offer up from the bottom of my heart :
Grant that my child may not die without the
grace of Baptism.

But if the all loving and all merciful God
favours me and lets me and my child live, then,
will I promise thee, O holy Mother, that I
will bring up the child in the fear and love
of God as a precious charge from heaven.

PRAYER FOR HELP TO MARY AND HER MOTHER, ANNE

Holy Mary, Virgin and Mother, and thou,
blessed mother Anne ! look upon the deep
anxiety of your sister. You were able to
rejoice on the happy issue of your confinement;
obtain for me the grace that my sorrow be
turned into joy, my anxiety into glad thanks-
giving. Help me, most holy Mother, that
my child may be born healthy and sound.
Willingly will I endure all my pain as atone-
ment for my sins and the sins of my husband,
and for a happy life for my child. Blessed
Mothers, Mary and Anne, do not fail me in
this dread hour. Amen.

A HUSBAND'S PRAYER FOR HIS WIFE NEAR HER CONFINEMENT

Almighty God, Who hast willed that woman shall in travail bring forth her child, look down in mercy upon my wife burdened with suffering, with whom, in the sacred bonds of marriage, I share joy and sorrow. To Thy fatherly care I commend her and the child whom Thou hast entrusted to us. Look down in mercy upon these two lives so dear to me. In pity for the anxiety with which I now appeal to Thee, preserve them both in happiness and in health. Save them, O Father in Heaven, by the merits of the paternal blessing by which Thou has consecrated our life's union and by which Thou hast pledged us to serve Thee always.

Jesus Christ, merciful Redeemer, Who hast on Thy Cross brought us forth again to eternal life, have pity on my wife who is to bring forth a new life. Thou hast endured untold tortures on the Cross ; comfort and strengthen my dear wife with Thy Cross, since she now lies in travail and in pain for her child. All

our anxieties and the tribulations and suffering of my wife I offer up to Thee, O suffering Saviour. Unite them to Thy sufferings ; by the power of Thy redeeming Blood favour us with a happy birth for our child ; keep mother and child alive and grant that one day we may all attain eternal life.

O God, the Holy Ghost, Comforter in sorrow and in distress, Who hast pity upon all who are laden with sorrow, have pity on the sufferings of my dear wife ; soothe her pains ; have pity on the child ; may it be baptised in Thy divine grace so that our child may become a worthy temple for Thee, the Sanctifier and Comforter of the world.

O Holy Mary, Mother of God, we fly to thy protection in our distress. Thou alone wast exempt from the heritage of pain which, since Eve, is the lot of every woman who bears a child. Through the virginal birth of thy Divine Son, have pity on my wife, who is near her confinement. O Mary, give her and our child thy blessing now.

All ye saints of God, who intercede so

powerfully for mankind in distress, especially you, holy mothers, who yourselves have brought forth children in pain and you, holy fathers of families, who, as I now, standing by the bed of pain of your wives have shared in their terrible hour of suffering, carry my confident prayer before the Face of God that He may have pity on our distress, that He may soften the pains of labour, that He may save the life of the mother and permit the newly born child to come into the light of day and obtain the grace of baptism. Amen.

SALVE REGINA FOR A PREGNANT WIFE

This prayer was often said by the woman's near relatives, friends (or neighbours) to inspire confidence in the expectant mother. This practice is to be recommended as a work of sisterly charity.

Hail, holy Queen, Mother of mercy ; hail, our life, our sweetness and our hope ! To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve ; to thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears ! Turn then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy towards us, and after this our exile,

show unto us the blessed fruit of Thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary !

℣. In all our troubles and anxieties.

℞ Make haste to help us, O Blessed Virgin Mary.

Let us pray

O Most loving Jesus, Thou didst in Thy great love confer on Thy Blessed Mother the special grace of having given birth to Thee in inexpressible joy without one pang of pain. Grant, we humbly beseech Thee, Thy divine help to this pregnant woman, our friend (or neighbour) ; soothe her pains ; let her bring forth her child without danger to her life and do Thou take mother and child under Thy divine protection. We ask this of Thee, Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world, Who wast born of the Virgin Mary in fullness of joy and Who with the Father and the Holy Ghost livest and reignest for ever. Amen.



THE MAGNIFICAT

*The happy mother should read on her great day
the song of praise in which the Mother of God
expressed her thanksgiving for her Child.*

My soul doth magnify the Lord.

And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my
Saviour.

Because he hath regarded the humility of his
handmaid : for behold from henceforth all
generations shall call me blessed.

Because he that is mighty hath done great
things to me ; and holy is his name.

And his mercy is from generation unto
generations, to them that fear him.

He hath shown might in his arm ; he hath
scattered the proud in the conceit of their
heart.

He hath put down the mighty from their
seat, and hath exalted the humble.

He hath filled the hungry with good things ;
and the rich he hath sent empty away.

He hath received Israel his servant, being
mindful of his mercy.

As he spoke to our fathers : to Abraham and
to his seed for ever.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

A FIRST BLESSING

At the birth of the child the father and mother should bless the child three times with holy water giving it their first blessing. They should reverently repeat this blessing after Baptism has been conferred.

May the Almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost bless you, my child, for time and eternity and may this blessing remain for ever with you. Amen.

PART III

AT THE CRADLE OF A CHILD

PRAYER OF A YOUNG MOTHER

*The ears of corn bow down when they are full
And ripe for harvest, so I bow to Thee
Whose goodness thrills me. Thou, O Lord, has
given
Thy priceless gift of motherhood to me.
My life abounds in blessings. Oh ! My God,
I am not worthy of the little one
Which I will fold in trembling, eager arms,
For Thou hast given it to me for my own.
O Lord, the babe is Thine, and also mine ;
And Thou hast placed me near to Thee, to be
The mother of Thy child. Lord, make me fond,
And doubly fond, to guard the child for Thee.
Teach me to be Thy handmaid, O my God,
To do Thy wishes, to be pure and mild
And bow myself entirely to Thy Will . . .
The handmaid of the Lord . . . and of my child.
Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE BIRTH OF A CHILD

O loving Father in heaven, Almighty God ! the hours of anxiety are now past. Thou hast given us a child and to me the grace to bring it safe and sound into the world. I give Thee thanks, O my God. I consecrate the child to Thee from the first moment of its life. I will have it brought to the baptismal font that Thou mayest receive it as a child of God and sanctify it all its life. Help me to be a good mother to my child, to rear it by wise precept and good example so that it may grow up good and holy and always deserve to be blessed by Thee. Blessed and praised be the most Holy Trinity from Whom this new life has gone forth: the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost. Amen.

O, Mother Mary, powerful Protectress and Mediatrix of grace, bring the thanks and praise of Thy unworthy sister to the throne of God and show Him gratitude to all eternity for His goodness to me.

HYMN OF THANKSGIVING

Soon after the birth of a child the father and mother should together return thanks to God. They can do this in a few words, but especially appropriate would be the recitation of the "Ambrosian Hymn" which the Church sings to express its high praise and great thanksgiving.

TE DEUM

We praise thee, O God, we acknowledge thee to be the Lord.

All the earth doth worship thee : the Father everlasting.

To thee all angels cry aloud : the heavens and all the powers therein :

To thee cherubim and seraphim : continually do cry :

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth.

Heaven and earth are full : of the majesty of thy glory.

The glorious choir of the apostles : praise thee.

The admirable company of the Prophets : praise thee.

The white-robed army of Martyrs : praise thee.

The Holy Church throughout all the world
doth acknowledge thee.

The Father : of infinite majesty.

Thy adorable, true and only Son.

Also the Holy Ghost the Comforter.

Thou art the King of glory : O Christ.

Thou art the everlasting Son : of the Father.

When thou tookest upon thee to deliver
man : thou didst not abhor the Virgin's womb.

When thou hast overcome the sting of death
thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to all
believers.

Thou sittest at the right hand of God : in the
glory of the Father.

We believe that thou shalt come : to be our
judge.

We pray thee, therefore, help thy servants,
whom thou has redeemed with thy precious
Blood.

Make them to be numbered with thy Saints ;
in glory everlasting.

O Lord, save thy people : and bless thine
inheritance.

Govern them : and lift them up for ever.

Day by day : we magnify thee.

And we praise thy name for ever : yea, for ever and ever.

Vouchsafe, O Lord, this day : to keep us without sin.

O Lord, have mercy upon us : have mercy upon us.

O Lord, let thy mercy be showered upon us : as we have hoped in thee.

O Lord, in thee have I hoped : let me not be confounded for ever.

AN ACT OF ADORATION

Holy God, we praise Thy Name !

Lord of all, we bow before Thee ;
All on earth Thy sceptre own,
All in heaven above adore Thee ;
Infinite Thy vast domain,
Everlasting is Thy reign.

Hark ! the loud celestial hymn

Angel choirs above are raising ;
Cherubim and seraphim

In unceasing chorus praising,
Fill the heavens with sweet accord,
Holy ! Holy ! Holy Lord

BAPTISM IN CASE OF NECESSITY

Baptism is the most necessary of all the Sacraments. Any one can lawfully administer it in case of necessity.

The person who is to baptise should form the intention of Baptising according to the mind of the Church ; then he should take holy water or ordinary water, pour it on the head of the child, saying at the same time, " I baptise thee in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." Two witnesses, or at least one, should, if at all possible, be present in order to testify to the Baptism, should it be called into question.

In case of a premature birth the foetus must be baptised. If the outer membrane be intact the whole foetus is put into warm water, the membrane is carefully opened and the words of Baptism are pronounced (I baptise thee, etc.). But if there be doubt whether the foetus is living or not Baptism is administered conditionally, " If thou art alive, I baptise thee, etc."

In cases of danger of death, when the child's head alone has been delivered, Baptism should be given on the head and the water should

flow on the skin. This Baptism is valid and should not be repeated conditionally, if the child is subsequently delivered alive. If only a hand, arm or leg is put forth and there is danger of death, the part delivered should be conditionally baptised. Should the child be subsequently delivered alive, Baptism must be repeated conditionally.

Whenever Baptism has been conferred in case of necessity, the child should be brought to the church as soon as possible for the completion of the ceremonies. The priest should be told of the Baptism that took place in the home.

WHAT A MOTHER SHOULD KNOW OF BAPTISM

I. *The Most Necessary Sacrament*

Baptism is the first and most necessary sacrament, the foundation of that whole Christian life which should be spent in the service of God. In Baptism we receive the redeeming grace of Christ which He merited for us on the Cross ; God the Father makes us His adopted children and the Holy Ghost penetrates our souls with divine love. Baptism is, then, a resurrection from the death of

original sin to the new divine life in Christ. By Baptism we are incorporated in the great family of God, the Church of Jesus Christ, of which He is the Head and we are the members. He who is baptised and dies in the grace of God has eternal life.

The Christian mother should thus understand all about this wonderful sacrament of Baptism. She should have a good knowledge of the prayers and ceremonies of Baptism that, later, she may be able to instruct her children on that sacrament. She should choose worthy sponsors for the child, so that they, being practical Catholics, could bring up the child carefully, if necessity arose.

2. *The White Garment.*

The white garment is a symbol of the baptismal innocence which the child has acquired. In some regions the mother or the godmother provides this garment which is in many cases made out of the mother's bridal veil. In most English-speaking countries a piece of white linen is used instead of a garment, but the symbolism is the same.

3. *The Candle*

The candle is for the child the symbol of baptismal grace, of the light of faith and of fidelity to the faith. The candle, which is provided in many places by the parent or sponsors and is brought back to the home, will remind the adopted child of God through his whole life that a living faith should burn in his heart, that he should guard his baptismal innocence as a burning light and have it shine before God.

Every candle at the altar, which burns during the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, reminds the child of God that his life must be such a light—a light which burns for God and for his neighbour; a light of grace and a light of love. So must Christ, the Eternal Light, shine before me; so must my light be nourished in His Light till I myself become an eternal light at the throne of God.

This candle in many districts is used at the First Communion of the child and held in the hand at death.

THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE BAPTISMAL DAY

In every family the baptismal day of each child should be celebrated in gratitude for God's wondrous gift of faith. The day of baptism is the birthday of eternal life. The mother can again describe to the children on this day of remembrance the greatness of the baptismal grace and entreat them earnestly and lovingly to remain children of God by preserving their baptismal grace in their own souls.

Our sponsors' gifts at Christmas or the New Year are reminders and symbols of the baptismal grace, which our Father in heaven has bestowed on us.

THE NAME-DAY OF THE CHILD

The name-day, the feast of the saint after whom one is named, should be celebrated in the family with some festivity and with the giving of a present. It should not be let pass without reminder of the baptismal day. The garment and the candle, of which mention has been made above, are according to the custom of some regions shown again to the

children on this day. Opportunity is thus given to the parents to remind the children of the great privilege of being adopted children of God and to recall to their minds their elevation to the supernatural state of grace.

The renewal of the baptismal vows on the First Communion day—a practice common abroad—is a reminder of the solemn promises which our godparents made to God on our behalf on the day of our Baptism, and which we should resolve never to break.

PRAYER OF THE MOTHER WHILE THE CHILD IS BROUGHT TO BE BAPTISED

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Divine Saviour, Thou hast said: "Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God," and to Thy Apostles Thou didst give the command: "Going therefore teach all nations, baptising them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost."

Behold now, my newly-born baby is being brought to the church that, through the power

of Thy holy Sacrament, it may become a child of God and heir to the Kingdom of Heaven. Receive my child to favour, Redeemer of the world. Cleanse it from original sin and sanctify it in Thy precious Blood. Drive the evil spirit from it for all time and fill its heart with the Holy Ghost that it may become a temple of God. By the sign of the Cross give it strength to confess Thee, Jesus crucified, before all the world and to live and die in this firm faith. By the blessed salt grant it heavenly wisdom and divine truth. By the anointing with holy oil give it power to fight against and to repel all sin.

Divine Saviour take my child to-day into the motherly bosom and shelter of Thy holy Church, and into the communion of all the faithful. To the end of its life, which is to be wholly consecrated to Thee, keep it in the true faith, in Christian hope and in the love of God and of its neighbour. Give it Thy holy angel to watch and guard it, place its patron saint beside it to serve as intercessor and model.

Preserve for eternal happiness this child whom Thou hast redeemed with Thy Blood.

HOLY BAPTISM—THE CEREMONIES

The mother should, if possible, follow all the ceremonies of the Baptism of her child. She would do well to meditate often on these prayers and to make use of them when she is giving lessons to her children on Baptism, on grace, on the Church and on the Redemption of mankind.

The priest receives the child at the door of the church, and says :

Priest : N., What dost thou ask of the Church of God ?

Sponsor : Faith.

Priest : Of what does faith assure thee ?

Sponsor : Life everlasting.

Priest : If then thou desirest to enter into life, keep the commandments. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbour as thyself.

Exorcism : Go out of him, (her) thou unclean spirit, and give place unto the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete.

Making the Sign of the Cross : Receive the

sign of the Cross both upon thy forehead and also upon thy heart ; take unto thee the faith of the heavenly precepts, and in thy conduct be such that thou mayest now be the temple of God.

Imposition of Hand : The priest lays his hand on the head of the child (and thereby takes it under the care of the Church).

Let us pray, we beseech Thee, O Lord, mercifully hear our prayers ; and keep by Thy perpetual assistance this Thine elect, N., signed with the sign of the Lord's Cross, that, preserving the rudiments of the greatness of Thy glory, he (she) may deserve, by the keeping of Thy commandments, to attain unto the glory of regeneration. Through Christ Our Lord.

R̄. Amen.

Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God, Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, vouchsafe to look upon this Thy servant, N., whom Thou hast been pleased to call to the grace of faith ; deliver him (her) from all blindness of heart ; break all the bonds with which Satan has bound him (her) ;

give him (her) access, O Lord, to Thy kindness, that being imbued with the seal of Thy wisdom, he (she) may be free from the corruption of every vice ; and, captivated by the sweet odour of Thy precepts, he (she) may joyfully serve Thee in Thy Church, and progress in virtue from day to day. Through the same Christ Our Lord.

Ry. Amen.

The Salt of Wisdom : The priest places blessed salt in the mouth of the child as a sign of heavenly wisdom and eternal preservation.

N., receive the salt of wisdom : let it be to thee a propitiation unto life everlasting.

Ry. Amen.

Priest : Peace be with thee.

Ry. And with thy spirit.

Let us pray

O God of our fathers, O God, the author of all truth, we humbly beseech Thee, graciously vouchsafe to look upon this Thy servant, N., and, now that he (she) has tasted this salt for the first time, never allow him (her) any more to lack heavenly food, so that he (she) may be

always fervent in spirit, rejoicing in hope, always at Thy service. Bring him (her), O Lord, we beseech Thee to the laver of the new generation, that, with Thy faithful, he (she) may deserve to attain everlasting rewards according to Thy promises. Through Christ Our Lord.

R/. Amen.

Exorcism : I exorcise thee, unclean spirit, in the name of the † Father and of the † Son and of the † Holy Ghost to go out and depart from this servant of God, N. ; for He commands thee, accursed one, Who walked on foot upon the sea, and stretched out His right hand to Peter when sinking.

Therefore, accursed devil, submit to thy sentence, and pay homage to the living and true God ; give honour to Jesus Christ, His Son, and to the Holy Ghost ; and depart from this servant of God, N., because God our Lord Jesus Christ hath vouchsafed to call him (her) to His holy grace and benediction, and to the living waters of Baptism.

The Sign of the Cross : And this sign of the holy cross which we make upon his (her)

forehead, do thou, accursed devil, never dare violate. Through the same Christ Our Lord.

Ry. Amen.

The Imposition of the Hand: Let us pray. I beseech Thy eternal and most just goodness, O holy Lord, Father Almighty, eternal God, author of light and truth, in behalf of this Thy servant, N., that Thou wouldst vouchsafe to enlighten him (her) with the light of Thy wisdom; cleanse him (her), and sanctify him (her); give unto him (her) true knowledge, that, being made worthy of the grace of Thy Baptism, he (she) may retain firm hope, right counsel, and holy doctrine Through Christ Our Lord.

Ry. Amen.

Entrance into the church: Now the church door is opened, the priest places the left end of the stole on the child and admits it into the church, saying: N., enter into the temple of God, that thou mayest have part with Christ unto life everlasting.

Ry. Amen.

The Confession of Faith: I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth

and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord ; Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost ; born of the Virgin Mary ; suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried : He descended into hell ; the third day he rose again from the dead ; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty ; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body ; and life everlasting.

R/. Amen.

Our Father Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy Name : Thy kingdom come ; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread ; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation ; but deliver us from evil.

R/. Amen.

Exorcism : Prayer against the Evil Spirit :

I exorcise thee, every unclean spirit, in the name of God the Father Almighty, and in the

name of Jesus Christ His Son Our Lord and Judge, and in the power of the Holy Ghost, that thou depart from this creature of God, N., which Our Lord hath vouchsafed to call unto His holy temple, that it may be made the temple of the living God, and that the Holy Ghost may dwell in him (her). By the same Christ Our Lord, who shall come to judge the living and the dead, and the world by fire.

R7. Amen.

Opening of the Senses : The priest moistens his thumb with his saliva and touches the ears and nostrils of the child with it, saying : Ephphetha, that is to say, Be opened : for a savour of sweetness. But thou, Satan, begone, behold the judgment of God shall draw near.

The Renunciation : N., Dost thou renounce Satan ?

R7. I renounce him.

P. And all his works ?

R7. I renounce them.

P. And all his pomps ?

R7. I renounce them.

Anointing for Life's combat : The priest anoints the child with the oil of Catechumens on the breast and between the shoulders in the form of a cross for the fight against Satan and sin, saying : I anoint thee with the oil of salvation, in Christ Jesus Our Lord, that thou mayest have life everlasting.

Ry. Amen.

The Baptismal Vows : Before the child is admitted to Baptism it professes through its sponsors its faith in the Blessed Trinity. The priest exchanges the violet stole for the white festive one, for Baptism is an occasion of joy for our Mother the Church. To the threefold renunciation of the devil corresponds the threefold profession of faith in the Blessed Trinity now to be made.

N., dost thou believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth ?

Ry. I do believe.

P. Dost thou believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord, Who was born into this world, and Who suffered for us ?

Ry. I do believe.

P. Dost thou also believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of

Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting ?

Ry. I do believe.

The Actual Baptism : This is the divine moment of grace in the young life of the child. God takes the guilt of original sin from it, adopts it as His own child and makes it an heir to heaven, plants it in the community of the Church, makes it a living member of the Mystical Body of Christ, a living branch of the mystic vine. Now comes the blossoming of the divine grace in the human soul which God has created, redeemed and sanctified. Heaven is opened to the child : the spirit of God takes up His abode in the child.

N., wilt thou be baptised ?

Ry. I will.

The Godmother holds the child on her arm, the Godfather places his hand on the child : The priest pours the Baptismal water on the head of the child three times in the form of a cross and meanwhile says “ (name of the child) : I baptise thee in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.”

The Anointing with Chrism : The priest anoints the crown of the child's head with chrism

in the form of a cross. God Almighty, the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has regenerated thee by water and the Holy Ghost and Who has given unto thee remission of all thy sins (*here he anoints*), may He Himself anoint thee with the chrism of salvation, in the same Christ Jesus Our Lord, unto life eternal.

R/. Amen.

P. Peace be unto thee.

R/. And with thy spiirt.

The White Garment : The priest places a white garment on the head of the child as a symbol of the holy innocence its soul now possesses and says : Receive this white garment, and see thou carry it without stain before the judgment-seat of Our Lord Jesus Christ, that thou mayest have eternal life.

R/. Amen.

The Light of God : The priest hands the child or godparents the lighted candle, the symbol of divine grace, saying : Receive this burning light, and keep thy Baptism blameless : observe the commandments of God, that when the Lord shall come to the nuptials, thou mayest meet

Him together with all the saints in the heavenly court, and have eternal life, and live for ever and ever.

Ry. Amen.

P. N., go in peace and the Lord be with thee.

Ry. Amen.

CONSECRATION OF THE CHILD

It is the custom in many places to have the child brought to the altar by the godparents and consecrated to Our Blessed Lady.

O Mary, loving Mother of God, we place this child under thy special protection. Thou art indeed its mother since thy divine Son has received it in Holy Baptism as a brother (sister). Keep this child innocent and pure and make it grow up a good Christian joyfully serving God. Amen.

Loving Guardian Angel, thou constantly seest the Face of the Father Who is in heaven. He has bidden thee to guard this child of God in all its ways. Be to it a true friend and watchful companion and lead it one day joyous and pure into the Father's Eternal Home. Amen.

May the blessing of Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost descend upon this child and remain with it for ever. Amen.

THE MOTHER'S THANKSGIVING FOR THE
BAPTISM OF HER CHILD

Almighty Eternal God, in all reverence and humility I kneel before Thee to thank Thee with all my heart for the inexpressible favour Thou hast conferred on me and on my child. In holy Baptism Thou hast made my child Thine own, hast cleansed it from the original sin it had inherited, and hast adorned its soul with innocence and divine beauty. Thou hast deigned to take up Thy abode in this poor, weak human body and hast made my child a temple of God.

Give me, O God, a great reverence for the body and soul of my child. Make me painstaking and patient in nursing, guarding, instructing and forming it for a noble life to be spent entirely in the service of God. How weak and poor I feel I am, when I think only of my own strength. I pray Thee, therefore, most loving Father, give me all the motherly

virtues, love, patience, meekness, truthfulness and justice that I may not only train my child by precept but above all by the good example of my life.

In gratitude for Thy goodness to me I will strive every day to go the way of Thy commandments that my child may travel the same road to Thee. O God, help me to guard the precious soul, entrusted to me, from sin and danger, from the allurements of the world and the snares of the wicked.

Fill me, O Holy Spirit, with wisdom and understanding, with counsel and fortitude, with piety and fear of the Lord that the training I give my child may lead it straight along the path to heaven.

And when I bless my child every day with the sign of the cross, may Thou, O Saviour on the Cross, bless it too. Bless all beginning and enterprise : bless all work and care ; bless all trouble and struggle ; bless all results and conclusions that one day I with my child may in everlasting happiness praise and bless Thee, eternal, heavenly Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

PRAYER TO THE PATRON SAINT OF THE CHILD

Holy St. N., (*here insert the name of the saint*) you are the special patron and protector of my child. I confidently present my child to you whose name we have given him (her) in holy Baptism. Take him (her) under your special protection in every danger to body and to soul. Be a model to him (her) in the practice of virtue and of daily self-denial. Add your blessing to mine as I bless him (her) every day. As the child's mother I thank you for the spiritual protection which you, as his (her) patron saint, have undertaken to extend to him (her). Whenever I call the child by his (her) name I will gratefully pay honour to you. For this child's sake be patron of the whole family and bring our common needs, but especially those of your chosen child, before the throne of God that he (she) may obtain grace and help from heaven through your intercession, and that, when he (she) comes to die, you may lead him (her) into the mansion of the blessed, where he (she) with you and all the saints will praise God for ever. Amen.

THE CHURCHING OF THE MOTHER

It is a praiseworthy practice, general in many Catholic countries, for mothers to go to the parish church to thank God for the favour of having given birth to a child.

The mother, holding a lighted candle in her hand, may say before the ceremony begins :

“ My God and my Lord, as a Christian mother I come to Thy house this day to thank Thee with all my heart for Thy paternal goodness to me. I give Thee thanks that I have happily escaped all dangers, above all I thank Thee for giving me a child who is Thy image by nature and who has been raised by holy Baptism to the supernatural dignity of an adopted child of Thine. He (she) is Thine and I consecrate him (her) to Thee for ever, but he (she) is mine through Thy loving kindness and it is for me to nurse and rear him (her). With grateful heart I promise Thee, most loving Father, to develop divine faith and divine love in my child. I shall willingly urge him (her) to the practice of prayer and of virtue that he (she) may become

a true Christian on earth and one day enter into the joys of heaven. May the burning light in my hand be a symbol of my thankfulness and of my joyous readiness to spare myself no sacrifice in the perfect performance of a mother's duty."

The priest sprinkles the mother with holy water, and says :

V. Our help is in the name of the Lord.

Ry. Who hath made heaven and earth.

Ant. She shall receive.

Psalm 23

The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof: the world, and all they that dwell therein.

For he hath founded it upon the seas ; and hath prepared it upon the rivers.

Who shall ascend into the mountain of the Lord : or who shall stand in his holy place ?

The innocent in hands, and clean of heart, who hath not taken his soul in vain, nor sworn deceitfully to his neighbour.

He shall receive a blessing from the Lord, and mercy from God his Saviour.

This is the generation of them that seek him, of them that seek the face of the God of Jacob.

Lift up your gates, O ye princes, and be ye lifted up, O eternal gates : and the King of Glory shall enter in.

Who is this King of Glory ? The Lord who is strong and mighty : The Lord mighty in battle.

Lift up your gates, O ye princes, and be ye lifted up, O eternal gates : and the King of Glory shall enter in.

Who is this King of Glory ? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of Glory.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost.

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. World without end. Amen.

Ant. She shall receive a blessing from the Lord and mercy from God her Saviour : for this is the generation of them that seek the Lord.

Placing the left extremity of the stole in the woman's hand, the priest leads her into the church, saying :

Enter thou into the temple of God, adore the Son of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Who hath given thee fruitfulness of offspring.

The woman now kneels before the altar, giving thanks to God for the benefits received. The priest says :

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, have mercy on us.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Our Father (*silently*).

℣. And lead us not into temptaion.

℟. But deliver us from evil.

℣. Save Thy servant.

℟. Who hopes in Thee, O my God.

℣. Send her help, O Lord, from Thy holy place.

℟. And from Sion protect her.

℣. May the enemy have no advantage over her.

℟. Nor the son of iniquity have power to hurt her.

℣. O Lord, hear my prayer.

℟. And let my cry come unto Thee.

℣. The Lord be with you.

℟. And with thy spirit.

Let us pray

Almighty, everlasting God, Who, through

the delivery of the Blessed Virgin Mary, hast turned the pains of the faithful at childbirth into joy : look mercifully on this Thy handmaid, who cometh in gladness to Thy holy temple to offer up her thanks : and grant that after this life, through the merits and intercession of the same Blessed Mary, she may prove worthy to obtain, together with her offspring, the joys of everlasting happiness. Through Christ Our Lord.

Ry. Amen.

The priest then sprinkles her with holy water in the form of a cross, saying :

The peace and blessing of God Almighty, the † Father, the † Son and the † Holy Ghost, descend upon thee, and remain for evermore.

Ry. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE MOTHER WHOSE DEAD CHILD LIVED TO BE BAPTISED

Almighty and eternal God I, as a Christian mother, enter Thy church again this day. I approach Thee to thank Thee and to place my sorrow before Thee. I thank Thee for having saved me from danger. I thank Thee

for having given me a child whose soul was a likeness and an image of Thee, O God. But in Thy inscrutable Providence, Thou, the Lord of life and death, hast laid Thy Almighty hand on my child and hast called it to Thyself in eternity. I pour out all my pain and woe at my loss before Thee, the God of all consolation. Yet even in my suffering I must praise Thy name. Thou hast raised my child in holy Baptism to the dignity of an adopted child of Thine. Thou didst give it the white vesture of grace and illumined its soul with the brightness of heaven and with everlasting beauty.

Now, O holy God, its soul shines in Thy kingdom as the sun. Now it sings the everlasting Alleluia and, in its untainted innocence, follows the Lamb of God to those fountains of living water where only joy and blessing and rapture gush forth.

Despite my affliction I wish to thank Thee with all my soul for this happiness of my child. O Lord give me consolation and lead me along life's way, so that, in the eternal never-fading happiness of heaven, I may one day be united with my child.

THE CHURCH BLESSES A CHILD

It is the act of a pious mother to bring her child to the priest that he may bless it as our Blessed Lord laid His hands on the children of Galilee. The Church has a special blessing for this purpose which the priest may use on every occasion.

THE BLESSING OF AN INFANT.

℣. Our help is in the name of the Lord

℟. Who hath made heaven and earth.

℣. Have mercy, O Lord.

℟. The Lord is the Keeper of the little ones.

℣. O Lord, hear my prayer.

℟. And let my cry come unto thee.

℣. The Lord be with you.

℟. And with thy spirit.

Let us pray

O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, Who, begotten before all ages, didst yet choose to be born in time as an infant, and lovest the innocence of that age ; Who didst lovingly embrace and bless the little children who were brought to Thee : bless this child also with

the blessing of Thy love, and grant that malice may never pervert its understanding, and that increasing in age, wisdom and grace, it may ever please Thee. Who livest and reignest for ever and ever. Amen.

The priest sprinkles the child with holy water, and says :

May the blessing of the Almighty God, † Father, † Son, and † Holy Ghost, descend on thee and remain always with thee. Amen.

PRAYER FOR OUR LADY'S PROTECTION

O Virgin Mary, Mother of the Incarnate Word ! I thank thee with all my heart for the help and the protection thou hast given me on the occasion of the birth of my child. To give sincere proof of my gratitude to thee I undertake to serve and follow thee as hand-maid of the Lord and servant of the family, which God in His goodness has entrusted to me. I confidently place this child under thy motherly care. O Mother of mercy, accept this innocent child, obtain for him (her) the grace to become a truly zealous servant of God to the joy of his (her) parents. Guard it

against all evil of soul and body that at all times it may live in the grace of God and after this earthly life attain to eternal happiness. Amen.

PRAYER TO THE GUARDIAN ANGEL OF THE CHILD

Holy Guardian of my child ! from the first moment that I conceived, you were made by the all-loving God guardian and protector of my child. Guide this child in all his (her) ways. Show him (her) the will of God, teach him (her) the commandments, obtain for him (her) grace and strength faithfully to do God's Will and obey His laws. Help him (her) to overcome the temptations of the world and of the flesh, to walk the narrow path of virtue and, after death, to live with you in the eternal bliss of heaven and to praise God for ever. Amen.

A MOTHER'S PRAYER AFTER A MISCARRIAGE

O God, Thou hast instituted the Sacrament of Matrimony for the preservation of the human race ; Thou hast called me to the

married state and hast consecrated my willingness to embrace it. Eagerly I hoped to be able to rejoice in the fruit of our love. But Thou hast willed it otherwise, O Heavenly Father. Thou hast taken my child from me before it was born.

I adore Thy Divine Providence in deepest humility and endure my sorrow as a stricken handmaid of the Lord. My heart is filled with sorrow lest any want of care on my part or any sin of mine might have brought this misfortune on me. If I have been at fault, O my Lord, accept this heavy cross as my atonement ; if I am not to blame, accept my cross as an atonement for all those sinful mothers who have shut their hearts against child-bearing and have thereby brought great guilt upon themselves and their home. Look down in mercy on me, O God, my Father. Give me strength to bear this trial. And if it be Thy holy will that a new life may come as the fruit of our love, protect and preserve it that I with my child may praise and bless Thee for all eternity. Amen.

THE MOTHER OF A STILL-BORN CHILD TELLS HER
SORROW TO THE CONSOLER OF THE AFFLICTED

O Mary, Mother of Mercy, I, a poor afflicted woman, am in great sorrow and know not how to make my plaint to thee. My heart is so full of sadness that I cannot speak of it and my soul is so full of grief that I may give way to sheer despondency. Thy divine Son once said : *A woman when she is in labour, hath sorrow, because her hour is come : but when she hath brought forth the child, she remembereth no more of the anguish for joy that a man is born into the world* (John xvi. 21).

I had sorrow, indeed, when my hour was come, but, instead of joy after the birth of my child, still greater sorrow befell me, because my child came into the world dead.

In my great distress I fly to thee, O comforter of the afflicted, and beg of thee to console me in my sorrow. I recall in deepest sympathy the awful grief which pierced thy heart when thou didst hold thy beloved Son, a corpse, in thy lap and when thou didst experience the terrible desolation which followed His burial.

Through thy pain and through thy desolation I pray thee abandon me not in my grief and be to me a loving consoler and helper ; obtain for me from the loving God the grace to bear this heavy affliction with patient resignation, the blessing to be preserved in future from every like calamity. I will carefully avoid all that could endanger the child in my womb and will offer up most fervent prayers ; I will avoid every deliberate sin and will lead a life of virtue ; in this way I will try to make myself worthy of the divine blessing. To that end may I be helped by thy powerful intercession with the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost. Amen.

O Jesus !

Thou art all my life,
Without Thee only death ;
My food Thou art,
Without Thee . . . only want ;
My joy Thou art ;
Without Thee . . . only grief ;
My rest Thou art,
Without Thee . . . only strife,
O Jesus.

O Jesus !

All my peace Thou art,
Without Thee . . . only torment.
My solace Thou art
In this vale of tears.
My love Thou art,
Without Thee . . . only pain ;
My crown Thou art,
Lord, I wait for Thee !
O Jesus !

THE TRAINING OF A CHILD

Children cannot be taught too soon to pray. Virtue can be instilled in them from the cradle. The mother should make the sign of the Cross upon them every morning and every evening with holy water and, as soon as possible, direct their little hand to touch their forehead, their breast and their shoulders. Even from the cradle by gentle and loving guidance they can be practised in obedience and trained in modesty by constant vigilance. One must not forget that the Holy Ghost dwells within the children from their Baptism and when the mother endeavours to train, correct and guide them, she is but stirring the power of the Holy Ghost within them. As soon as the children can lisp a word, the holy names of Jesus, Mary and Joseph can be made familiar on their lips, the Holy Ghost assisting. When words come freely the mother can teach them little aspirations: "I love Thee, O Jesus!" "I love Mary, my Mother."

Holy pictures or statues in the home have an abiding effect in the formation of one's

spiritual life. A child in its mother's arms may be shown, for instance, Holy God the Baby Jesus, the Mother of Jesus and our Mother, and the Guardian Angel. It may be told how to join its tiny hands and look up with loving eyes to Holy God and later on to pray with infant lips. Our Blessed Lady, the Mother of Baby Jesus, will become the object of its love and the ever-present Guardian Angel become its familiar companion. The crucifix later on will tell it of the love which God bears it, of the malice of sin which nailed Jesus to the Cross. In returning love and sympathy the child will be led to do all that pleases God and to avoid all that displeases Him.

Thus does faith enter into the fibres of the heart ; thus does love of God and of Mary, His Mother, grow from and entwine itself with the love of Daddy and of Mammy and, with the all-powerful assistance of the Holy Ghost, dominate its young soul.

The critical and the most effective years for the training of a child in prayer and in virtue are from two and a half years of age to four and a half. Infancy is the golden period for

inculcating proper habits of conduct. The mother, for instance, will first direct the child's hands, as we have said, to make the sign of the Cross, and, when the child's intelligence dawns, will ask it to make it itself and, when practice is perfect, she will explain to it as only a mother can what it all means. In like manner the child will be taught obedience, the basis of all virtues for the spiritual life of the child ; for obedience is humility in practice. It will, it must, be made do what it is told in the very tender years and, as soon as the child's mind has developed somewhat, it will be told why it should obey and then, the Holy Ghost assisting—too much emphasis cannot be laid upon that—the child will become obedient on principle and realise in its own little but supernatural way that to be bold is to offend God. Gentle correction of posture, of gesture will awaken the spirit of modesty and purity ; vigilant correction of manifestation of anger in look, word or gesture will teach it self-control and self-denial and cultivate gentleness and charity.

It has been said that one can foretell the

permanent character of a child when it has reached the age of five. The rest of its life is but a burgeoning and blossoming and a fructifying of the seed that is sown in its heart in its mother's arms and at its mother's apron-strings. The mind of the young child is as wax to receive impressions and as marble to retain them.

The school teacher is no substitute for the mother ; for the mother is specially called by God to teach her child its first prayers, give it its first lessons in religion and set it fairly along the path of virtue. To leave these tasks to a stranger in normal cases and thus postpone a child's religious initiation to its sixth or seventh year is a great crime against the child and a terrible dereliction of a sacred duty in the eyes of God.

THE TRAINING OF A MOTHER

It is a growing and excellent custom for a young woman, who is engaged, to attend schools of domestic science that she may be well qualified to conduct her future home. How much more necessary is it for her to

train for the difficult work of rearing a child on which the salvation of her children's souls may depend. The education for motherhood, it is said, begins in the cradle. From the earliest years a girl must be trained to acquire the spirit of sacrifice and of self-denial, resignation to God's holy will and glad acceptance of all He demands of woman. Unselfishness should characterise her whole life. Living for others should be her dominant ideal. A mother is not born ; she is made. Her natural womanly qualities of tenderness and love and sympathy should be developed by her education and transfigured by her love of God and of Our Blessed Lady.

THE POPE SPEAKS TO MOTHERS

Our Holy Father, Pope Pius XII, speaking to mothers has said : " It is your task from the cradle to begin their [the children's] education in soul as well as in body ; for if you do not educate them they will begin, for good or ill, to educate themselves. Purely organic habits contracted at that time may later prove a serious obstacle to the spiritual life of the soul.

All the powers of feeling, all the childish sensations, by means of which mind and will come gradually to awakening, need to be educated, trained, carefully guided, otherwise the normal awakening and proper direction of those noble faculties of the spirit will be compromised and discounted. From that early age a loving look, a warning word must teach the child not to yield to all its impressions, and as reason dawns it must learn to discriminate and to master the vagaries of its sensations ; in a word, under the guidance and admonition of the mother, it must begin the work of its own education.

“Train the mind of the child,” the Pope continues : “Do not give them wrong ideas or wrong reasons for things—from their questions take occasion lovingly and patiently to train their minds, which want only to open to the truth.

“Train the character of your children. Correct their faults, encourage and cultivate their good qualities and co-ordinate them with that stability which will make for resolution in after life.

“Train their hearts. Frequently the decision

of a man's destiny, the ruin of his character, or a grave danger threatening him, may be traced to his childish years when his heart was spoiled by the fond flattery, silly fussing and foolish indulgence of misguided parents. What deep and rich potentialities for love, goodness and devotion lie dormant in the heart of a child! You, mothers, must awaken them, foster them, direct them, raise them up to Him Who will sanctify them, to Jesus; to Jesus, and to Mary, who will open the child's heart to piety, will teach it, by prayer, to offer its pure sacrifices and innocent victories to the divine Lover of little ones.

LAWS OF LIFE

“In the time of adolescence of your children you have a delicate and difficult task. In that time of trial, Christian mothers, remember that to train the heart means to train the will, to resist the attacks of evil and the insidious temptations of passion. You have to prepare your sons and daughters, so that they may pass with unfaltering step through time of crisis and physical change; and pass through it

without losing anything of the joy of innocence, preserving intact that natural instinct of modesty with which Providence has girt them as a check upon wayward passion ; you will keep a watchful eye on their steps ; you will not suffer the whiteness of their souls to be stained and contaminated by corrupt and corrupting company ; you will inspire them with a high esteem and zealous love of purity advising them to commend themselves to the sure and motherly protection of the Immaculate Virgin. Finally with the discretion of a mother and a teacher, and, thanks to the open-hearted confidence with which you have been able to inspire your children, you will not fail to watch for and to discern the moment in which certain unspoken questions have occurred to their minds and are troubling their senses. It will then be your duty to your daughters ; the fathers' duty to your sons, carefully and delicately to unveil the truth as far as it appears necessary, to give a prudent, true and Christian answer to those questions, and set their minds at rest. Your words, if they are wise and discreet, will give a safeguard

and a warning in the midst of the temptations and the corruption which surround them.

If imparted by the lips of Christian parents, at the proper time, in the proper measure, and with the proper precautions, the revelations of the mysterious and marvelling laws of life will be received by them with reverence and gratitude and will enlighten their minds with far less danger than if they learned them haphazard from some disturbing encounter, from secret conversations, through information received from over-sophisticated companions or from clandestine reading, the more dangerous and pernicious as secrecy inflames the imagination and troubles the senses.

“Training in the home, however wise, however thorough, needs to be supplemented and protected by the powerful aid of religion. You must co-operate with the priest in teaching your children the first rudiments of catechism and piety which are the only basis of a solid education. Teach them to love God, to love Christ, to love our Mother the Church and the pastors of the Church, who are your guides. Love the Catechism and teach your

children to love it ; it is the great handbook of the love and fear of God, of Christian wisdom and of eternal life." (*The Pope Speaks to Mothers* : English Catholic Truth Society.)

THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS

On the night before He died Jesus Christ gave us the greatest mystery of His most loving Heart : The Holy Mass. In this Sacrifice of the New Law Christ offers Himself up till the end of time. *In this Sacrifice he renews daily for us what He once did on Calvary when He offered Himself up as the Sacrificial Lamb to His Eternal Father for the sins of mankind.* Bethlehem and Calvary—the Crib and the Cross—are brought close together in every Mass. In the invisible Crib of the Sacred Host Jesus lives as truly as He did in the manger ; in the consecrated Host and adorable Chalice of His Blood, the Cross of Calvary comes before us and Jesus prays to the Father as He prayed on the first Good Friday, " Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." " It is consummated." " Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit."

The second mystery of this wonderful Sacrament is our active part in the Sacrifice. We can prepare the sacrificial gifts ; we can with Jesus offer up our life, ourselves, on the paten and with Jesus offer up all our cares and sufferings in the chalice. We can with like conviction say with St. Paul, "It is not I but Christ who lives in me."

Therefore the holy Mass is for every Christian the centre of his life : it means immeasurable grace from God ; it means loving abandonment of oneself to God ; it offers atonement for all our sins ; it means intimate union with Jesus Christ, our Brother and our Redeemer, Who through the Mass leads us all home to our Father in heaven as redeemed, liberated and sanctified by His most precious Blood.

In deep devotion we will join in the offering up of the Holy Sacrifice. To the altar of the Cross we bring all that makes life dear and all that makes life difficult : our joys and tears, our calling and our toil ; the family entrusted to our care and the salvation of our soul. We pray with St. Nicholas de Fluë : "Lord take

me from myself and give me entirely to Thyself."

When we cannot assist at Mass (and even on the ordinary week-day) let us unite ourselves spiritually with all the Masses said in the whole world, especially with the holy Sacrifices offered in our parish church. We can send our Guardian Angel to bring our poor gift of ourselves to the Cross and to bring back the rich graces to help us the whole day long. Thus we remain living members of the Mystical Body of Christ—and "who lives in Me and I in him has eternal life."

Mothers who are prevented from assisting at Mass on Sundays and week-days may add the prayer given below to their morning prayers. But if they have time and opportunity they can meditate upon and read at home one of the following formulas for Holy Mass

These three formulas are chosen to stimulate their meditation and to give variety to it.

1. The Prayers of the Nuptial Mass should often be read in later life and occasionally, if only in part, be used at Mass. Our holy Mother

the Church, has made them the means of so many blessings !

2. The Mass with our Mother Mary attempts to associate your cares and your thoughts with a few motherly thoughts from the life and suffering of Mary, Mother of God.

3. In the third Mass we give the substance of the prayers which constitute the Ordinary of the Mass.

It would be excellent now and again, more especially on Sunday, to make use of a missal, so that you may offer up the Holy Mass in the exact words in which it is offered up to God by the priest and the parochial congregation in union with him.

PRAYER WHEN A MOTHER CANNOT HERSELF ASSIST AT MASS

Heavenly Father, Almighty God, I, Thy humble handmaid, adore Thee with profound humility and love. May I serve Thee to-day in abject devotion and do my duty in thought, word and deed as Thou wouldst have me do it. Therefore I unite myself, O God, with the many thousands of Masses which will be

offered up to Thy Divine Majesty this day throughout the whole world. I unite myself especially with the Masses said in our church. I pray Thee, most loving Father, to accept with the precious offerings of Thy divine Son my poor offerings that they may be sanctified and glorified and be blessed for me and all the dear ones under my charge.

O Jesus Christ, Who, as the Lamb that was slain, hast taken away the sins of the world, take all my guilt away from my sorrowing soul. Through the power of Thy Cross give me strength to serve Thee, to bear with patience all the trials and difficulties this service entails and make me a truly blessed mother to my family. Let me and my family share in all the graces of the Cross which are to-day so lovingly bestowed throughout the world. Let not Thy precious Blood and Thy suffering have been in vain for me or for any one of mine.

Behold, O Heavenly Father, I send my Guardian Angel to the altar of Thy Son that all the sacrifices, labours, difficulties, joys and sorrows of my day be joined to the sacrificial

offerings of our parish community. Send my holy Angel back with Thy divine grace, O Lord, that I may have the courage to say with Thy blessed Mother: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord: be it done to me according to Thy word."

Most dear Saviour, I beg of Thee to pour Thy redeeming Blood upon the troubled sea of pain in which the poor souls in Purgatory are plunged and, more especially, to ease the sufferings of my relatives and friends for whose guilt I may have been in part responsible. O Lord, give them eternal rest and may perpetual light shine upon them.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son: and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be world without end. Amen.

NUPTIAL MASS.¹

MASS FOR A BRIDEGROOM AND BRIDE

(For the condensed Ordinary of the Mass, see
page 143 sqq.)

Introit. *Tobias* 7 and 8

May the God of Israel join you together ;
and may He be with you, who was merciful
to two only children ; and now, Lord, make
them bless Thee more fully. *Psalm* 127.
Blessed are all they that fear the Lord, that
walk in his ways.

℣. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son :
and to the Holy Ghost.

℟. As it was in the beginning, is now, and
ever shall be : world without end. Amen.

Prayer

Graciously hear us, almighty and merciful
God : that what is done by our ministry may

¹ As the nuptial blessing, which every bridal pair should seek, cannot be given outside Mass except by special indult, it is recommended to have the marriage fixed for a day outside Advent and Lent, during which seasons, except by special dispensation from the Ordinary, the nuptial blessing cannot be given.

be abundantly fulfilled with Thy blessing.
Through Our Lord.

Lesson. *Eph.* v. 22-33

Brethren : Let women be subject to their husbands as to the Lord ; for the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the church ; he is the saviour of his body : Therefore, as the church is subject to Christ, so also let the wives be to their husbands in all things. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved the church, and delivered himself up for it ; that he might sanctify it, cleansing it by the laver of water in the word of life ; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish. So also ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself: for no man ever hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it ; as also Christ doth the church ; for we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave

to his wife ; and they shall be two in one flesh. This is a great sacrament ; but I speak in Christ and in the church. Nevertheless, let every one of you, in particular love his wife as himself, and let the wife fear her husband.

Gradual. *Psalm 127*

The wife shall be as a fruitful vine on the sides of thy house. *℣.* Thy children as olive plants round about thy table. Alleluia. Alleluia. *℣. Psalm 19.* May the Lord send you help from the sanctuary, and defend you out of Sion. Alleluia.

After Septuagesima, instead of Alleluia and Verse, is said :

Tract. *Psalm 127.*

Behold, thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord. *℣.* May the Lord bless thee out of Sion : and mayest thou see the good things of Jerusalem all the days of thy life. *℣.* And mayest thou see thy children's children: peace upon Israel.

In Paschaltide, instead of the Gradual, is said : Alleluia, Alleluia. May the Lord send you

help from the sanctuary, and defend you out of Sion. Alleluia. May the Lord out of Sion bless you, he that made heaven and earth. Alleluia.

(Gospel. *Matt. xix. 3-6*)

At that time ; The Pharisees came to Jesus, tempting him and saying : Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause ? Who answering, said to them, Have ye not read, that He Who made man from the beginning, made them male and female ? and He, said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they two shall be in one flesh. Therefore now they are not two but one flesh. What, therefore, God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.

Offertory. *Psalms 30*

In thee O Lord have I hoped ; I said, Thou art my God ; my times are in thy hands.

Secret

Receive, we beseech thee, O Lord, the offering we make to thee on behalf of thy holy

bond of wedlock ; and even as this institution is the gift of thy bounty, so dispose of it according to Thy will. Through Our Lord, etc.

After the Pater Noster, the priest stands at the Epistle corner of the altar, turns towards the bridegroom and bride, who are kneeling before the altar, and says over them the following prayer :

Let us pray

Be propitious, O Lord, to our humble prayers, and graciously assist Thine own institutions which Thou hast ordained for the increase of mankind ; so that what is joined together by Thine authority may be preserved by Thy help. Through Our Lord, etc.

Let us pray

O God, Who by Thy almighty power didst create all things out of nothing ; Who, having set in order the beginnings of the universe and made man in God's image, didst appoint woman to be his inseparable helpmate in such wise that the woman's body took its beginning from the flesh of man, thereby teaching that it is never lawful to separate what it has pleased Thee to join together ; O

God, Who hast consecrated the marriage bond by a mystery so exalted that the nuptial alliance is the figure of the sacred union of Christ and His Church; O God, by whom woman is united to man and Who givest to their intimate union, ordained from the beginning, that sole blessing of which we have not been deprived either in punishment of original sin or by the sentence of the deluge : look mercifully upon this Thy handmaid who, being now to be united to her spouse, earnestly desires to be fortified by Thy protection ; may her marriage be a yoke of love and of peace ; may she, faithful and chaste, wed in Christ and may she ever follow the example of holy women ; may she be lovable to her husband as Rachel ; wise like Rebecca ; long-lived and faithful like Sarah ; may the author of sin never find anything in her that he can claim as his own ; may she be steadfast in her faith and ever observant of the commandments ; may she, united to one only spouse, shun all unlawful intercourse ; may she fortify her weakness by the strength of a disciplined life ; may she be in shamefacedness grave, in modesty worthy of

all respect, in heavenly doctrine well instructed; may she be fruitful in offspring; may her life be pure and irreproachable; may she attain unto the repose of the blessed in the heavenly kingdom. May they both see their children's children unto the third and fourth generation and arrive at a desired old age. Through the same Jesus Christ, Our Lord.

The priest turns towards the altar, and says the Libera nos and at the usual time gives Holy Communion to the newly-married couple.

Communion. Psalm 127

Behold, thus shall every man be blessed that feareth the Lord; and may thou see thy children's children; peace upon Israel.

Post Communion

We beseech Thee, Almighty God, to accompany the institution of Thy providence with Thy gracious favour; that Thou mayest keep in lasting peace those whom Thou joinest in lawful union. Through Our Lord, *etc.*

Having said Benedicamus Domino or Ite, missa est, the priest turns to the bridegroom and bride and says:

May the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob be with you, and may He fulfil His blessing in you ; that you may see your children's children even to the third and fourth generation, and afterwards may you have life everlasting, by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ ; Who with the Father and the Holy Ghost liveth and reigneth God world without end. Amen.

The priest then sprinkles the bridegroom and bride with Holy Water, and turns round to the altar to say the following prayer :

May my worship and bounden duty be pleasing unto Thee, O holy Trinity ; and grant that the sacrifice, which I have offered, all unworthy, in the sight of Thy Majesty, may be received by Thee and win forgiveness from Thy mercy for me and for all those for whom I have offered it up. Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

He then blesses the people.

May almighty God, Father, Son † and Holy Ghost, bless you. Amen.

Turning to the Gospel side of the altar, he says :

P. The beginning of the holy Gospel according to St. John.

Ry. Glory be to Thee, O God.

In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God : the same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him, and without him was made nothing that was made : in him was life, and the life was the light of men ; and the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. This man came for a witness to give testimony of the light, that all men might believe through him. He was not the light, but was to give testimony of the light. That was the true light, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world. He was in the world : and the world was made by him : and the world knew him not. He came unto his own ; and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them he gave power to be made the sons of God : to them that believe in his name, who are born not of blood, nor of the will of the

flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh (*here the priest and people genuflect*). and dwelt among us ; (and we saw his glory, as it were the glory of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth.

R^y. Thanks be to God.

THE HOLY MASS WITH OUR BLESSED MOTHER MARY

May be read when the expectant mother is unable to go to Mass.

Most holy Mother and Virgin Mary, thou wast allowed as the chosen one of our sex to be co-redemptrix by the side of thy divine Son. Thou wast allowed to prepare His way to us in this valley of tears ; thou wast allowed to be near thy Son on Calvary where His Blood was shed. O Mary Mother and companion of the eternal High Priest, take me by the hand, lead me to the mount of sacrifice that through thee and in thy sacrificed Son, Jesus Christ, I may offer a sacrifice acceptable to God.

When the priest is at the foot of the altar.

O Mary, little Maiden, I see thee mount the steps of the sanctuary a young girl in the temple. Take me with thee, thy unworthy sister ; adorn my soul, as thy soul was adorned, with love, with the spirit of sacrifice, with humility and maternal courage.

I see the Angel of the Lord come into thee ; I hear his greeting and thy noble reply : “ Behold the handmaid of the Lord ” and then the marvel happened ! “ Thou didst conceive of the Holy Ghost ” and the angel said to thee : “ Thy Son shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Most High.” O Holy Mary ! repeat thy word of consent for me “ because He that is mighty hath done great things to me,” He has blessed me also by the fruit of my womb. Pray for me, O Mother most powerful, that I may be filled with the grace of the Holy Ghost, that my child, too, may be great and be blessed in thy Child. Because I am not free from sin as thou art, I will repent of what in me is guilty, what in me is sinful. Intercede with thy merciful Son to grant grace to me, a poor

sinner, that His coming to us may not have been in vain for me.

I give thee my word, O Mother Mary ; bear it to the Father in heaven ; let Him send to me in suffering and toil, in trouble and pain what He has prepared for me : I am the handmaid of the Lord : O Mary, give me courage.

The Kyrie

I hear thee knocking at the doors of Bethlehem, O Mary. They were not opened to thee. Knock for me at the Heart of God. It will open for thee, and through thee He will give me grace and strength in the difficult days that I must face. Lord, have mercy on us.

The Gloria

I hear the angels sing ; the night is turned into day ; the star stands over thy poor Christmas dwelling. O Most Blessed of all mothers, let me pray with thee to Jesus Who was born of thee ; O Virgin Mary ; let all my life be praise and thanksgiving and glory to God. Him will I serve ; to Him will I give myself ; to Him will I consecrate the wonder

of the child I bear and all who are entrusted to me—my whole family, my husband and my children.

O Mary, radiant with happiness, let thy Christmas star shine over my house. Be it to us a protector and a guide through all the days of our life.

O Jesus Christ, Man and God, Child and Redeemer, I adore Thee, I give Thee thanks ; I glorify Thee for the wonder Thou hast worked in me. Amen.

The Epistle

How many directions from God have been given to thee, Holy Mary ! Thou didst bring thy Child to Elizabeth ; through desert and through the long night thou didst flee to a distant land ; thou didst wander back home to Nazareth ; thou didst conduct thy Child to the Temple of Jerusalem. O great Mother of God, give me some share of thy motherly strength to listen to the commands of God, to carry them out willingly and to give myself entirely to the Almighty in my responsibility for my child, my husband and my family as

thou didst. O holy Virgin of the Lord : " Be it done unto me according to thy word."

The Gospel

The glad tidings announced thy own Child, O Mary. He spoke to thee of the eternal loving Father in heaven. Thy child was the Word of the Almighty Creator. He was the messenger of love from the All Merciful Father to all men.

My child is also a wonder work of the Creator, His holy work. The soul of my child is the breath and image of God. O, let me protect it as thou didst protect thy Jesus, O Mary. And as thou wast privileged to send Him forth as Teacher and Redeemer, so let me and my family take part in announcing the Kingdom of God and help to spread the Kingdom of thy divine Son. By thy holy life and good example before the world make us all proclaim the goodness and mercy of God, through Jesus Christ, thy loving Son.

The Credo

O Mary, the world has called thee blessed because of thy faith ! Pray that as wife and

mother I may have like faith in the mission and in the trust God has given me ; faith in God's loving kindness and assistance in all I do ; faith in God's mercy and love in my wretchedness and in my need. I believe in God the Father, Who has chosen thee from among all women as His daughter and has blessed us all in thee. I believe in Jesus Christ, Whom you have given us and Whom you have borne and in whom we are all redeemed. I believe in the Holy Ghost, Who has chosen thee for His spouse and Who wills to sanctify us all in thee. O Mary, bear my faith to the blessed and most Holy Trinity that, when life is over, in this faith I with my family may be called blessed.

The Offertory

I address myself to thee, O Virgin Mary, who didst present Jesus in the Temple, who didst find Him in the Temple. For the priest is preparing the sacrificial gifts—the bread and wine—at the altar as thou didst once prepare thy heart for the message of the angel, as thou didst prepare the manger for

the coming of the Lord, as thou didst prepare thy whole life long for the total sacrifice of thyself at the foot of the Cross.

O Holy Mother, ever ready to accept any and every sacrifice, intercede for me that I may have that spirit of sacrifice which enabled thee in answer to the angel's message to utter thy *fiat* : " Be it done unto me according to thy word " ; that spirit of sacrifice with which thou wert filled when Simeon foretold of thee in the Temple that " Thy own soul a sword shall pierce ; " that spirit of sacrifice which led thee to meet thy Son on the way of the Cross, that in His bitter sufferings thou mightest offer Him a mother's sympathy ; that spirit of sacrifice which bade thee stand at the foot of the blood-stained Cross until the sacrifice of thy divine Child's life was perfectly accomplished.

The Host, which is now being prepared on the altar, will become thy own Child at the consecration. Lay my whole life and all I love beside this white host, offer it to God the Father for me that in Jesus Christ I may become a sacrificial gift presented to my Creator.

The Chalice, which is now being prepared, will contain the Precious Blood of thy Son offered as a new atonement to the Eternal Father. O Mother, drop all my tears, my cares and sufferings into this sacrificial Chalice of thy Child that they may be sanctified and may bring forth fruit in love for God and for all the dear ones left to my care.

Take into thy pure hands, O Mother, all that my family will do, all they will suffer, all their cares and all they will strive for now and for ever, and bring it all before the Face of God that He may transform it into grace and mercy. Amen.

From the Sanctus to the Consecration

The angels in heaven sing the praises of thy Son as they sang around the manger on the first Christmas night, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord." O Queen of angels, let me unite with their voices: I wish to praise, bless and adore Him, for He has regarded the humility of His handmaid.

But now thy way leads to Golgotha. My Jesus drags His Cross, drags it to the mount of

consecration, "who for us has borne the Cross," "who for us was crucified." Thou didst accompany Him in silence. Thou didst stand by Him, offering Him up to the Eternal Father. O Mary, my sister, most powerful, let me now stand beside thee with all my crosses ; with my blood which I gave my child ; with my tears which I have shed in my sorrows. Let me stand by the Cross of thy beloved Son and with thee offer Him up in sacrifice.

Jesus—I live for Thee ! Jesus—I die for Thee. Jesus, I am Thine in life and in death. O be kind to me ! Be merciful to me ! Pardon me, O Jesus, all my sins.

Jesus, I believe in Thee ! Jesus, I place my trust in Thee ! And in all my love, in my child, in my family, in my husband, in all. I love Thee, my God, Thee above all.

After the Consecration

The Cross is lifted up. Let us stand, O Mary, and let us be silent. O God, the Cross was lifted up out of love for us. Give me love, always love. Mary, thou has given Jesus to

all the world—and He has given thee to St. John. Mary, thou didst give to us the Redeemer of the world. He gave us to thee, the mediatrix of all graces. Jesus, Saviour, make me worthy of Thee.

Mary, Virgin most powerful, receive us as thy children myself, my child, all whom I love. In this love I will give myself up to the Cross—In every task that God lays on me, in every sacrifice He demands of me, O Mary, make me strong.

Now do I place them all around Thy Cross, O Lord. Behold Thy Mother brings them all before Thee, one after another, my husband, my children, my parents, my friends, those who have been good to me, and my unworthy self. By all the sufferings and sorrows of Thy dearest Mother Mary I ask Thee, O Lord, to bless us all. Let not Thy Blood and Thy suffering have been all in vain for any one of them.

And the dead, O Lord, who have gone before us and who had done so much good in their life-time, now wait for one drop of Thy Blood. Give them eternal rest, dear Lord.

The Communion

Now the priest at the altar is like thee, O Mary, for he brings thy Child to us into our hearts this day. So thou didst place thy Child in the arms of the shepherds, on the golden embroidered cloaks of the Kings, in the trembling hands of Simeon, in the wrap of the aged Anna, the prophetess. O Mary, give thy dear Son to me also and with all thy tears and with His Blood wash away what remains of sin in my soul, so that I may be worthy to bear within me thy dear Lord.

He has now triumphed over death. He gives us eternal life. He has risen in strength from the tomb ; He leads us to an everlasting resurrection. And thee, most holy Mary, Jesus raised to the highest blessedness of heaven. Jesus "who has assumed thee body and soul into heaven," "who has crowned thee in heaven." Most Holy Virgin, Mother Mary, do not forget me in thy great glory. Mary, spread thy mantle out that it may be to me a shield and a protection. Be a guide to all who are under my charge ; let me be a good mother, that none of them may be lost on

the road that leads homewards to the Eternal Father, not one of them.

O Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us. Give us peace—peace in my home, peace in my heart ; peace to all the world.

After Mass

O blessed moments of the Holy Mass ! O Mary, thank the Lord, my God, for me that I have been privileged to assist at it. And when I leave this church to go to the work of the day bless me, O Lord—and bless this little child that lives within me. Bless everything that Thou dost ask me to do this day. Take all for Thyself. Through Mary, conceived without sin, I offer it all to Thee, the Triune God. In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

THE THIRD MASS¹

THE MASS OF THE CATECHUMEN

(The name given to the part of the Mass that extends from the beginning to the Offertory.) It was only to this part of the Mass that the

¹ From *Holy Childhood* (Eason & Son Ltd.,) by Ven. Archdeacon MacMahon, P.P., V.F.

Catechumens (those who were preparing for Baptism) were admitted.

The priest, having come from the sacristy, goes up the altar steps and places the chalice upon the altar. He opens the Missal and goes down to the foot of the altar.

Prayers at the Foot of the Altar

I make the Sign of the Cross with the priest and pray

My God, Thou art my judge. Do not condemn me. Give me light to come to Thee, Who art my joy. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost. Amen.

The priest bows down and asks pardon of God. I repent of my sins and say

I confess to Almighty God, to Blessed Mary ever Virgin, to Blessed Michael the Archangel, to Blessed John the Baptist, to the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, and to all the Saints and to you, Father, that I have sinned exceedingly in thought, word and deed, through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault.

(Here strike your breast three times.)

Therefore, I beseech the Blessed Mary ever Virgin, Blessed Michael the Archangel, Blessed John the Baptist, the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, all the Saints and you, Father, to pray to the Lord our God for me.

May the Almighty God have mercy on us, and lead us to life everlasting.

The priest goes up the steps, kisses the altar and goes to his right to read from the Missal.

The Introit

(which changes every day.)

O you children of God, bring to the Lord glory and honour.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost. Amen.

The priest goes to the centre of the altar to say with the server

The Kyrie

Lord, have mercy on us ; Christ have mercy on us ; Lord have mercy on us.

The priest, except he be in black or violet vestments, will usually say

The Gloria

Glory be to God on high. We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we adore Thee, we give Thee thanks, O Almighty God.

Have mercy on us, O Lord Jesus Christ. Thou alone art holy, Thou alone art the Lord.

Be praised with the Holy Ghost in the glory of the Father. Amen.

The priest kisses the altar, turns round towards the people and says, "Dominus vobiscum" ("The Lord be with you.")

*I answer to myself
And with thy spirit.*

The priest returns to the Missal to recite with outstretched hands

The Collect

(which varies with each day.)

O Lord, fill our souls with divine grace that we may serve Thee with a chaste body and please Thee with a clean heart. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The priest places his hands on the Missal before reciting

The Epistle

(which changes every day.)

Thus saith the Lord God : Behold I will send my angels who shall go before thee, and keep thee in thy journey and bring thee on to the place I have prepared. Take notice of him and hear his voice. Thanks be to God.

*The priest continues to read*The Gradual¹*(which changes every day.)*

God had given His angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways.

The Missal is changed to the other side of the altar where the priest, having made three small Signs of the Cross, reads

The Gospel

(which changes every day.)

Make with the priest three small Signs of the Cross on your forehead, your lips and your breast.

And they brought to Him also infants, that

¹ The Tract, Alleluiatic Verse, and occasionally a Sequence (e.g. *Dies Irae*) may occur here.

He might touch them ; which when the disciples saw, they rebuked them. But Jesus calling them together, said : Suffer little children to come to Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God. And I say to you ; whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a child shall not enter into it.

When the priest finishes the Gospel I say :

Praise be to Thee, O Christ.

After the Gospel the Priest goes to the centre where he recites the Nicene Creed on Sundays and on special feasts.

The Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty ; Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary ; suffered under Pontius Pilate ; was crucified, dead and buried ; He descended into Hell ; the third day He rose again from the dead ; He ascended into Heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father

Almighty ; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and life everlasting. Amen.

THE MASS OF THE FAITHFUL

(The name given to the portion of the Mass from the Offertory to the end.)

The priest kisses the altar, turns round and says "Dominus vobiscum," (The Lord be with you.)

I answer

And with thy spirit.

The priest is about to offer up to God the bread and wine which, in the consecration, will be changed into the Body and Blood of Christ. We, at the same time, offer up to God ourselves, our life, our will, our mind, which are to be united to the will, the mind and the heart of Jesus when He offers Himself in sacrifice to the Eternal Father at the moment of the Consecration of the Mass.

The priest says the Offertory—a preparation for the offering—which varies each day. I pray

You love, O God, those who give with a cheerful heart ; Fill us with joy, O Thou in Whom we hope.

The priest uncovers the chalice, offers up the host (the bread) which lies on the paten. I join with the priest in this offering

Accept, O holy Father, Almighty Eternal God this spotless host which I offer up to Thee for my many sins and faults. May it bring good to all faithful Christians, both living and dead.

The priest places the host on the corporal and then pours wine and drops a little water into the chalice.

O God, Thou art united to our human nature more closely than the wine and water are united now in the chalice ; mayest Thou Who hast deigned to take upon Thyself our human nature grant us a share in Thy divine nature.

The priest offers up the chalice.

O Lord, we offer up the chalice for our

salvation and for the salvation of the whole world.

The priest, having placed the chalice on the corporal, says two short prayers.

May our sacrifice, which we offer up with humility and deep sorrow for our sins, be received by Thee, O God.

And may the Holy Spirit bless it.

The priest washes his hands at the Epistle corner of the altar.

O Lord, make my heart pure that I may worthily offer up sacrifice to Thee. Take not away my soul, O God, with the wicked. Have mercy on me. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

The priest kisses the altar, turns round and says "Orate, fratres" (Brethren, pray).

I answer.

May the Lord receive the sacrifice from thy hands for His glory, for our good and for the good of the whole Church.

The priest with outstretched hands says the prayer called

The Secret

(Which varies every day.)

O God, may our offering united with the Sacrifice of Thy Son obtain for us Thy supernatural gifts.

The Preface

The priest says the Preface in which he gives thanks to God.

P. Lift up your hearts.

With the server I answer.

We have them raised up to the Lord.

P. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

I answer.

It is right and just.

And continue to say

It is truly just that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to Thee. O holy Lord, Father Almighty, everlasting God through our Lord Jesus Christ. The arch-angels and angels praise Thee in heaven and with them we join and say :

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of hosts.
Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory.
Hosanna in the highest.

The Canon

The priest bows then, kisses the altar and blesses the offering (the bread and wine) and prays

O loving Father, we ask Thee, through Jesus Christ, to bless these holy offerings. We present them to Thee for the whole Church, for the Pope, for the Bishops, our priests, relatives and friends and for all the faithful.

*The priest spreads his hand over the offerings.
The Sanctus bell rings.*

We ask Thee, O Lord, to accept these offerings. Save us from the fires of hell. Give us a place among Thy Saints. Bless these offerings. May they become for us the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Consecration

The priest does what Jesus did at the Last Supper. In the name of Jesus he speaks the words: "This is my Body." When the priest raises up the Sacred Host I look up and say

My Lord and my God.

I bow down my head and I say

I adore Thee, I love Thee.

Then the priest changes the wine into the Precious Blood of Jesus. In the name of Jesus he says these words: "This is the Chalice of My Blood." He raises the chalice and, looking up, I pray

My Lord and my God.

Bowing down again, I pray

I adore Thee. I love Thee.

The Sacrifice of Calvary has now been renewed upon the altar without the shedding of blood. Jesus is now present upon the altar.

After the Consecration the priest, in the name of the whole Church, offers up to God the Sacrifice of His only Son. With him I pray

O my God, we offer to Thee as our sacrifice, the Body and Blood of Jesus now present on the altar, Graciously accept our offering though it be made by us who have sinned against Thee.

The priest bows down and kisses the altar. I pray

In deep humility we pray to Thee; send Thy angel to lay our offering at the feet of Thy

Divine Majesty. May it ascend to heaven so as to bring down upon us Thy blessings and graces, give heaven to all who have died in grace.

The priest now strikes his breast.

Sinners though we are, we hope, O God, in Thy mercies. Counting on the prayers of Thy holy martyrs and saints, we hope, through Thy pardon to be one day with Thee in heaven. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, through Whom and in Whom all honour and glory is offered to Thee. Amen.

The Communion

Preparation

When the priest again prays aloud, I pray

Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name ; Thy kingdom come ; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread ; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them who trespass against us ; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. Amen.

The priest divides the Sacred Host into three parts and drops into the chalice the smallest portion that is broken off, the other two portions being placed on the paten. He says

The peace of the Lord be with thee.

I answer

And with thy spirit.

The priest strikes his breast asking pardon and peace from Jesus.

I strike my breast and say

Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.

In a Dead Mass instead of "Have mercy on us," say "Give them rest."

Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, give us peace.

In a Dead Mass say, "Give them eternal rest," instead of, "Give us peace."

The priest bows down to say the prayers in immediate preparation for Communion. I pray

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, free me by Thy Most Sacred Body and Blood

from all my sins and from all evil. Give me Thy grace always to keep Thy commandments and let me never be separated from Thee.

The priest holds the Sacred Host in his left hand, and striking his breast three times with his right hand, he says, and I say with him

Lord I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof; say but the word and my soul shall be healed (*three times*).

The priest receives the Body of Jesus Christ and drinks the precious Blood in the chalice.

Communion of the Faithful

With the server, I say

The Confiteor

I confess to Almighty God, to Blessed Mary, ever Virgin, to Blessed Michael the Archangel, to Blessed John the Baptist, to the Holy Apostles, Peter and Paul, to all the Saints and to you Father, that I have sinned exceedingly in thought, word and deed, through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault.

Therefore I beseech the Blessed Mary ever

Virgin, Blessed Michael the Archangel, Blessed John the Baptist, the Holy Apostles, Peter and Paul, all the Saints and you, Father, to pray to the Lord our God for me.

When the priest turns round, I say

May the Almighty and Merciful God give us pardon, absolution, and remission of our sins. Amen.

The priest takes a Sacred Host from the ciborium (the vessel which contains the Hosts) and turns round. Look for a moment at the Host in the priest's hand and say

Lamb of God Who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.

Then the priest says three times "Domine, non sum dignus," etc. ("Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my, roof, etc.>"). Bowing down I strike my breast three times and say

Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof; say but the word and my soul shall be healed.

Take your place for Holy Communion. Keep your thoughts fixed on the wonderful gift you are

about to receive. When you have received, return to your place full of reverence and speak to Jesus in your heart. Express your thoughts in your own way or say

I welcome Thee, O Jesus, into my heart. I adore Thee, I love Thee, I place my trust in Thee. I thank Thee, I am sorry I ever sinned against Thee. Give me grace to amend my life.

If I do not receive Holy Communion ; I make a spiritual Communion.

My Jesus, I believe Thou art really present in the Blessed Sacrament ; I desire to receive Thee into my soul. Come spiritually into my heart. I unite myself entirely to 'Thee as if Thou hadst already come. Do not permit me to be ever separated from Thee. In Thy grace let me live and die.

Thanksgiving after Communion

The priest takes wine into the chalice.

May the Holy Communion we have received help us to gain eternal life.

The priest washes his hands over the chalice.

May Thy Body and Blood O Lord, which I have received, remove all traces of sin from my soul.

The priest after he has purified the chalice, reads at the Epistle side of the altar the COMMUNION-VERSE (which varies with each Mass).

Understand my cry ; hearken to the voice of my prayer, my Lord and my God : for to Thee will I pray, O Lord.

The priest goes to the centre of the altar, kisses it : turns round and says " Dominus vobiscum " (" The Lord be with you ").

I answer

And with thy spirit.

The priest returns to the Missal to say the POST-COMMUNION (which changes with every Mass) —I pray

As we have received the food of immortality, grant, O Lord, that we, whose glory is to serve under the standard of Christ our King, may reign with Him for ever in heaven. Who liveth and reigneth for ever. Amen.

The priest goes to the centre of the altar, kisses it, turns round and says

The Lord be with you.

I answer

And with thy spirit.

The priest then says, "Ite, missa est" ("Go, the Sacrifice is finished"), or "Benedicamus Domino" ("Let us bless the Lord").

I answer

God be thanked.

In a Mass of the Dead the priest says Requiescant in pace (May they rest in peace), to which the answer is Amen.

The priest turns round, says a prayer, kisses the altar and gives the blessing. I say

May the blessing of Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost descend upon us and dwell with us for ever. Amen.

The priest then goes to his left and reads the Last Gospel (taken usually from the beginning of St. John's Gospel). I read

In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God.

And the Word was God. All things were made by Him. In Him was life and the life

was the light of men. He was in the world. And the world knew Him not. He came unto His own and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them He gave power to be made the sons of God, to them that believe in His name. And the Word was made flesh . . .

At the end of the Gospel I say
Thanks be to God.

PRAYERS AFTER MASS

Hail, Mary (*three times*).

Hail, holy Queen, Mother of Mercy ! hail, our life, our sweetness and our hope ; to thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve ; to thee do we send up of our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn, then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy towards us ; and after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary !

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray

O God, our refuge and our strength, look down with favour on Thy people who cry to Thee ; and through the intercession of the glorious and immaculate Virgin Mary, Mother of God, of St. Joseph her Spouse, of Thy blessed apostles Peter and Paul, and of all the saints, in mercy and goodness hear our prayers for the conversion of sinners, and for the liberty and exaltation of our Holy Mother the Church. Through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen.

Blessed Michael the Archangel, defend us in the hour of conflict ; be our safeguard against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God restrain him we humbly pray : and do thou, O Prince of the Heavenly Host, by the power of God, thrust Satan down to hell, and with him the other wicked spirits, who wander through the world for the ruin of souls. Amen.

(An indulgence of 10 years may be gained by those who recite these prayers together with the priest and on their knees after assisting devoutly

at Low Mass ; also an indulgence of 7 years is attached to what follows :

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us. (Three times.)

DE PROFUNDIS

(Said in Ireland before Leonine prayers)

Out of the depths I have cried unto thee,
O Lord ;

Lord, hear my voice.

Let thine ears be attentive to the voice of
my supplication.

If thou, O Lord, shalt observe iniquities ;
Lord who shall endure it ?

For with thee there is merciful forgiveness :
and by reason of thy law I have waited for
thee, O Lord.

My soul hath relied on his word ; my soul
hath hoped in the Lord.

From the morning watch even until night,
let Israel hope in the Lord.

Because with the Lord there is mercy, and
with him plentiful redemption.

And he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

Eternal rest give to them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them.

SACRAMENT OF PENANCE

“If your sins be as scarlet, they shall be made as white as snow : and if they be red as crimson, they shall be white as wool.” (Is. i. 18.)

God is merciful. “God so loved the world as to give His only-begotten Son.” (John iii. 16.)

Jesus Christ pardoned the penitent Mary Magdalen and showed marked favour to her after His Resurrection. He saved the woman taken in adultery from the death with which the Pharisees threatened her ; from the Cross He promised Paradise to the penitent thief ; as Good Shepherd He leaves the whole flock in order to seek out the lost sheep. Let you seek Him ; return to your Father’s House and say : “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before Thee.”

“Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them.” (John xx, 23.)

A mother's soul should always be free from sin. Holy mothers transfer for the most part their spirit of piety to their children. Mothers train, teach and guide. How can they point the way if they themselves are astray? In times of family and personal trials mothers should not run the risk of being crushed by the sense of guilt upon their soul. That is specially true at the time of childbirth, which sometimes may cost a mother her life.

The mother of a family should encourage by precept and example the practice of frequent confession on the part of the members of her household, for such a practice exercises a most benign and salutary influence on the home. It promotes union and harmony between husband and wife; it nourishes the spirit of obedience in the children; it inspires submission and loyalty in the household staff and it makes peace and prosperity reign in the domestic circle.

A RULE OF LIFE

I will go to confession often. I will make a good confession always; I will make every confession as if it were my last.

PRAYER TO THE HOLY GHOST

Holy Spirit, eternal Light and Dispenser of all graces, come, give me light, give me grace that I may recall all my sins accurately, repent of them with all my heart, truly and sincerely confess them and with the help of Thy grace earnestly amend my life. Amen.

EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

You are kneeling in the presence of the all-loving God, the all-merciful God. Be neither careless nor anxious. If you have the habit of examining your conscience every evening, then, you need not spend much time at it before confession. God will not judge her who judges herself rightly.

Alternate your methods of examination of conscience from time to time. One time according to the commandments of God and the precepts of the Church; another time according to your duties towards God, your neighbour and yourself. Look into your main faults; find out if some sins are constantly recurring; be sincere with yourself and

give your confessor a clear account of your sins. Tell, first, what you find it hardest to tell. Give the number in case of mortal sins and tell the circumstances that add a new malice to your sin, When you are not sure or clear in your own mind, confidently ask the confessor to help you. After every confession you should hear the word of the Lord, "Peace be with you."

1. God protects His own honour.

Have you through sloth failed to say your daily prayers? Have you seen that your children say their prayers? Have you taught them to say them long before their school-going age? If you were distracted in your prayers what was the cause of it: Want of faith? Haste? Carelessness? Dissipation of mind?

Were you wanting in reverent fear of God? Did you suppress a rising passion, check an oft recurring habit of sin?

Have you said prayers suitable for yourself? for your children?

Have you neglected your duty as a parent to give religious instruction to your children?

Have you seen that they go to the Sacraments frequently ?

2. *God protects His Holy Name and the word of God.*

Have you used the Holy Name irreverently ? In anger ? In joke ? By way of a curse ? Have you done all in your power to prevent cursing in your home ?

Has the word of God been revered by you ? Has it helped to deepen and to quicken your faith ? Do you listen with respectful attention to sermons ? What kind of magazines, journals, papers—monthly, weekly, daily—do you admit to your home ? What kind of novels, story-books ? Is there anything in them that would prove a likely danger to your children's faith and morals ?

Were you superstitious (crystal-gazing, fortune-telling, spiritualism, finding one's horoscope, palmistry, telling the cards) ?

Have you shown want of trust in God ? Have you been resigned to His holy Will ?

Have you murmured against God ? against suffering ? against trials ?

Have you guarded your faith and the faith of your children : in business ? in the factory ? in the office ? amongst strangers ?

Have you entertained doubts about the faith ? Were you ashamed of your faith ? Have you denied your faith through human respect ?

3. *God safeguards His Holy Day.*

Was Sunday a holy day in your soul ? in your room ? in your family ? A day of recollection ? of divine service ? of rest ? Have you done unnecessary servile work or allowed it to be done ?

Have you given honour and paid homage to God by devoutly assisting at Holy Mass ? Have you seen that your husband, your children, your maids, your employees have fulfilled their Sunday obligation ? Do you give your maid reasonable opportunity to go to evening devotions, to sermons, to the Sodality or is she given the opportunity only of going to an early Mass ?

The Catechism exhorts us strongly to do good works on Sunday.

4. *You and others*

God protects the family. Have you shown respect to your parents? Have you supported them when necessary and possible? Are you a comfort to them in their declining years? Have you been patient with them if they are invalids? Have you prayed for your dead parents?

As a Wife. Have you been subject in love to your husband in all that is right and just? Have you bridged over difficulties and checked quarrels by your kindness, love and gentleness? Have you corrected him when necessary, praised him when deserving? Do you think of his troubles, his anxieties, tiredness? Have you made him go out of his home because you are neglectful, because the house is badly kept, because you do not keep the house clean, because you have no interest in family joys and domestic pleasures? Have you been unfair and inconsiderate to your people-in-law?

As a Mother. Have you looked after the bodily welfare of all thy dear ones? Have you cared for their souls, for their upbringing by your words, your good example, by your

prayers? Have you preserved peace and unity in your home? Have you inflicted punishment in anger? Have you abused your parental authority? Have you been careful to secure for your children rest, recreation and pleasures besides making them work? Have you been a motherly woman and mistress to your maid, to your staff? Are you just, kind to others, or have you overworked them, not acknowledged their work, paid them badly? Have you been a help to your husband in reminding him of his duties towards his country, the government, his fellow-men (official duty, good work, fraternal charity, his duty to help others when he can)?

Have you yourself given a good example of motherly kindness in these matters?

5. God protects the body and the life of man

Have you injured your health by excessive work, by unnecessary worries (instead of having confidence in God), by immoderation in eating, drinking, games, by over-indulgence of reading or other extravagance?

Have you thoughtlessly exposed your life

to danger? Have you endangered the life of others, by carelessness, want of attention?

Have you paid too little attention to your children? Have you thought of the child you are bearing when engaged in work, games, amusements?

Have you deliberately wished to endanger the life you are bearing within you? Have you criminally destroyed it? Have you advised others or helped them to bring about like destruction of life (abortion)?

Have you injured the health of others by injustice, anger, hatred, persecution, enmity?

Have you given scandal?

Have you done moral harm to anyone? by tempting them?

6. *You and the sources of life. God protects the sanctuary of marriage*

Have you been modest and reverent in regard to your body? Have you dishonoured yourself by smutty talk? by suggestive behaviour? by too intimate friendship? Have you fulfilled the duties of your married life with ready willingness? Have you and your

husband regarded marriage as the holy thing it is? Have you sinned by refusing to undertake the sacrifices proper to married life? Have you been averse from bearing children? Have you incurred guilt in preventing conception or in preventing a child being born to you?

Have you served your husband with fidelity and sincere love or have you violated your fidelity to him in thought, word or deed?

Have you broken the harmony of married life by your jealousy, bad temper, nagging ways? Have you avoided all risk of adultery? Have you trained your children to be modest in dress and to have reverence for their bodies? Have you tried to keep them from temptation and danger? Have you kept a faithful watch over the company they keep and the friendships they make?

7. *You and your neighbours' property. God protects property and labour.*

Have you acted according to justice and right in your family, with your servants, your fellow-workers and with your children?

Have you stolen anything, received stolen goods, hidden them, or bought them?

Have you been dishonest by giving false measure, by theft of money, by carelessness in your work? Have you wasted your time, neglected your duties?

Have you lightly contracted debts, bought without necessity or beyond your means? Have you been extravagant in dress, in fashion, in pleasure-seeking?

Have you made too great an inroad upon the family income? Have you misused your husband's means or foolishly spent your children's savings? Have you been careful in looking after the household expenditure (food, clothing, house, property), or have you injured your family by want of thought? of order? of zeal in house-keeping? Have you conscientiously managed the family income and thereby have not forgotten the poor?

Have you seen that your husband gives fair wages to his workmen and that he is straight in his business dealings, that he has not offended, done wrong to his business competitors, has not trampled upon nor taken wrong advantage

of the weak, that he makes no undue profits and administers honestly the property of others of which he has charge? Have you warned him when you discovered he was doing something wrong or unjust?

Have you as a housewife and mother helped within your means and opportunities the poor and needy, poor families with many children or have you been harsh, miserly, cold-hearted?

8. *God protects truth and honour*

Have you lied, acted the hypocrite, deceived? Have you done anybody harm or injury by lying? Have you by lying injured them in their reputation, in their property? Have you spoken of your neighbours' faults? Have you made false accusations against them? Have you been carrying stories about them not to their credit?

Have you been backbiting? Have you gossiped unkindly? Talked about the private affairs of your family and spoken badly of your husband, your children, the teachers, the priests? Have you lied before your children?

about business matters ? about money matters ? Have you brought up your children to be truthful and honest ?

Have you made good the harm you may have done to your neighbours' honour and reputation ? Have you corrected any false statements you may have made regarding them ?

9. *God guards fidelity in the home.*

Have you through your own deliberate fault been the occasion of sinful thoughts, desires, by immodest dress, in mixed bathing, while dancing, in unwomanly behaviour ?

Have you endangered or broken your fidelity to your husband by freely consenting to sinful thoughts, desires ? Have you engaged in unbecoming games ?

10. *God protects property*

Have you been envious of your neighbours' fortune, well-being, property ? Have you been covetous of others' property, goods ? Have you by intrigue, underhand dealing, wicked talk wished to ruin or actually ruined your neighbour in his property or fortune ?

Were you covetous, jealous ?

THE PRECEPTS OF THE CHURCH

Have you observed the Holydays as you ought to keep the Sundays? Have you gone to Mass on these feast-days and given an opportunity to your children, your employees, your maids to do so? Have you observed the days of fast and of abstinence and seen that your family has observed them? Have you done your Easter duty and seen that your husband has done his? Have your children been baptised, educated as Catholics, received religious instructions? Have you sent your children to good Catholic schools and have you chosen right places for their further studies and cultural training?

CONTRITION AND PURPOSE OF AMENDMENT

The most important thing in confession is contrition, sorrow for sin. You must be sincerely sorry for having offended God, Who is so good in Himself, your most loving Father and your Saviour and Redeemer (perfect contrition) or for having e.g. deserved hell on account of your mortal sins (imperfect contrition). Sorrow for sin does not consist in feeling, in visible emotion or in the shedding of

tears. What suffices is that you detest your sins above all other evils, that you have the firm will to avoid them and are ready to take the means to amend your life. To make a good confession a purpose of amendment as well as contrition is necessary. Consideration of the Cross, reflection on the goodness of God and on the benefits you have received from Him can move you to deep repentance for having offended Him.

A particular prayer of repentance is not prescribed. The following will serve your purpose.

PRAYER OF REPENTANCE

Father in heaven, look down upon my wretchedness and upon my guilt. Thou hast been so good to me ; Thou hast overwhelmed me with benefits and loving care. I have been so ungrateful, so unfaithful, so cowardly and so unmortified. Father, have mercy on me. Shut me not out from Thy kindness and Thy mercy. My soul is full of sorrow for all my sins. Father, forgive me and give me strength to amend my life ; give me a great love that will burn up all that is sinful within me.

My Saviour, my crucified Lord ! For me

Thou didst become man, for me Thou didst choose the poor manger and the blood-stained Cross. For me Thou didst open Thy Heart and didst shed Thy Blood to blot out my guilt. I have loaded myself with new guilt and heaped new guilt upon Thy Cross. I have driven the nails into Thy hands and Thy feet, and have placed the crown of thorns upon Thy head. O loving Lord, forgive me ! Drive me not away. Forgive me as Thou didst forgive the penitent thief. Through all Thy sufferings, through Thy precious Blood, through Thy bitter death I implore Thee ! O Jesus, look down on me with favour ; be merciful to me ; O Jesus, forgive me all my sins.

Help me, dear Lord, to take the path of virtue. Point out to me the dangers that lie before me and give me grace to avoid them. Fill my whole heart with love that nothing henceforward, O Saviour on the Cross, will turn me away from Thee.

Cleanse my soul with Thy precious Blood ; remind me of the price of my redemption, when sin again allures me. Thou art the way—I will follow Thee. Thou art love—I will

love Thee. Thou art life—I will live and die for Thee.

Psalm 129

De Profundis

*A Prayer of a sinner, trusting in the mercies of
God.*

Out of the depths I have cried to Thee, O
Lord,

Lord hear my voice.

Let Thy ears be attentive to the voice of my
supplication.

If Thou, O Lord, will mark iniquities :

Lord, who will stand it ?

For with Thee there is merciful forgiveness .

And by reason of Thy law, I have waited
for Thee, O Lord.

My soul hath relied on His word :

My soul hath hoped in the Lord.

From the morning watch even until night,

Let Israel hope in the Lord.

Because with the Lord there is mercy :

And with Him plentiful redemption.

And He shall redeem Israel from all His
iniquities.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.

As it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

An ancient prayer to our suffering Saviour

O glorious Heart of the most Holy Son of God Who died upon the Cross ! In the great bitterness of Thy suffering Thou hast become a deep sea of love. Into Thy loving and suffering Heart I, full of confidence, cast the burden of my sins, my lost time, my failure to practise virtue and to do good works, all my outward and inward faults, all my troubles and sufferings and all the frailty of my heart.

I cast them all into the depths of Thy most loving Heart and into the sea of Thy sorrows, that Thou mayest grant me true repentance, pardon for all my sins and close union with Thy life and death. Therein may all my failings and imperfections perish for ever.

THE CONFESSING OF SINS

Accustom yourself to tell your sins distinctly and clearly so that the confessor may have a true

picture of your soul and be able to give you help and advice.

It is often convenient to say the first part of the Confiteor immediately before you enter the confessional.

Listen carefully to the priest when he talks to you and advises you on your future conduct. Answer his questions promptly and clearly.

While the priest is pronouncing the words of absolution, fill your heart with deep sorrow expressed in a fervent act of Contrition.

The words the priest uses are as follows :

FORM OF ABSOLUTION

May the Almighty God have mercy on thee, and forgive thee thy sins, and bring thee to life everlasting. Amen.

Then with his right hand raised towards the penitent the priest says :

May the almighty and merciful Lord grant thee pardon, absolution and remission of thy sins. Amen.

May our Lord Jesus Christ absolve thee : and I, by his authority, absolve thee from every

bond of excommunication and interdict, as far as I am able and thou hast need. Then, I absolve thee from thy sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

May the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, the merits of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of all the saints, all thy good acts and thy sufferings, be to thee unto the forgiveness of sins, increase of grace, and reward of life eternal. Amen.

After the absolution, kneel in a quiet part of the church, say the second part of the *Confiteor*, and in the spirit of recollection thank Almighty God and praise His immeasurable mercy.

PRAYER AFTER CONFESSION

Psalm 102

Thanksgiving to God for His mercies

Bless the Lord, O my soul,
And let all that is within me bless His holy name.
Bless the Lord, O my soul,
And never forget all that He hath done for thee.
Who forgiveth all thy iniquities :

Who healeth all thy diseases.
Who redeemeth thy life from destruction :
Who crowneth thee with mercy and compassion.
Who satisfieth thy desire with good things :
Thy youth shall be renewed like the eagle's.

The Lord is compassionate and merciful :
Long-suffering and plenteous in mercy.
He will not always be angry :
Nor will He threaten for ever.
He hath not dealt with us according to our sins :
Nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.
For according to the height of the heaven over the
earth :
He hath strengthened his mercy towards them that
fear him.

As far as the east is from the west,
So far hath he removed our iniquities from us.
As a father hath compassion on his children,
So hath the Lord compassion on them that fear
him :
For he knoweth our frame.
He remembereth that we are dust :
Bless the Lord all ye his angels :
You that are mighty in strength,
And execute His word.

Bless the Lord, all ye His hosts :
You ministers of His that do His will.
Bless the Lord all His works :
In every place of His dominions,
O my soul, bless thou the Lord.

THANKSGIVING TO OUR SAVIOUR

My Saviour and Redeemer, Jesus Christ, now I hear Thy Easter greeting which Thou, victorious and forgiving, didst direct to mankind : "Peace be with you." I discern the efficacy of Thy precious Blood, which has washed all guilt from my soul so that I may rise to a new life. I thank Thee, O Lord ; with joyful heart I thank Thee. In Thee will my new life begin. In Thy love and in Thy power I will tread the path of virtue, fulfil the duties of my state in life and endure the cares of my family. Deprive me not of Thy grace for one moment and, then, I can do all things in Thee, who strengthenest me.

I unite the penance, which I am now about to say, with all Thy suffering, with Thy precious Blood, with Thy crucifixion and death.

(Here say your penance.)

Take, O Lord, my whole liberty ; take my memory, my understanding, my entire will. Thou has given me whatever I have or possess. I give it all back to Thee and hand it over to be directed completely according to Thy holy will. Give me Thy love and Thy grace, O Lord, and, then, I am rich enough, and desire no more.

Think, then, in the blessed and purified state of your soul of all who are entrusted to your care and pray for them, e.g. : the child you are bearing, your husband, your family ; speak to God of all that is the cause of anxiety to you—God is kind and loving.

PRAYER TO MARY FOR PERSEVERANCE

Holy Mother Mary, thou hast won for countless sinners not merely the grace of a good confession but also the gift of perseverance in good, through the power of thy intercession. I pray thee to beg this great grace for me that I will faithfully fulfil all that I have promised to thy divine Son in my confession to-day and that I will keep my word with inviolable loyalty. Let me never be separated

by mortal sin from the love of thy Son.

O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for me, a poor sinner. Mary, Refuge of sinners, guard me, take care of me as thy property and thy possession.

Mary, spread thy mantle out and let it be our shield and our protection. Let us take our stand under it, till all storms pass away. O loving Protectress, shelter us always.

HOLY COMMUNION

A good mother should unite herself at least once a month with Jesus Christ in the Blessed Eucharist. Weekly, frequent and daily Communion are the ideals at which to aim. The regular and frequent reception of the Blessed Sacrament is a most edifying lesson to her husband and children. A mother's good example is a constant sermon in the home and possibly the most appealing of all sermons. In the sight of God, of angels and of men there are few incidents more pleasing than to see a whole family approach the altar together. Family feasts and commemoration days should be celebrated always in union with God through the partaking of the Bread of Angels.

Make every possible effort to receive the Body and Blood of Our Lord while you are bearing a child. You will be all the better prepared to endure the pangs of childbirth. For some mothers it is difficult to refrain from satisfying their thirst during the night at certain stages of their pregnancy. If they do not obtain an indult from Rome to receive Holy Communion after having broken the fast, let them accept the sacrifice of missing Holy Communion in the spirit of resignation and prayer. God will provide for them.

If you receive Holy Communion during Mass the most fitting preparation is to follow the prayers of the Mass in your Missal or to recite the paraphrase of them to be found on pages 154 sqq. If Holy Communion be given to you outside the Mass or immediately before it, prepare for it as your heart dictates or recite the prayers that follow on page 189. The fruits of Holy Communion depend largely upon the degree of your devotion at the moment you receive the Sacrament.

A family that cultivates the practice of frequent and devout Communion is especially blessed by God. But, as the mother and trainer of your children, take care that the children do not go to

Communion out of mere thoughtless habit or out of human respect ; train them so that in after life they will be sure to go to the altar frequently and receive Communion with earnest piety.

An Act of Faith

Jesus Christ, my Saviour and my Lord, I believe Thou art truly and really present in the Most Holy Sacrament. As God and Man, as Redeemer and Sanctifier Thou dwellest amongst us. I believe in Thee. In this faith give me eternal life with Thee. In this holy Sacrifice of the Host and of the Chalice Thou dost offer up Thy Body and Blood—Thy life. I give Thee thanks for this great mystery, may it never be lost to my soul. In gratitude and in faith I will do for Thee all that Thou dost demand of me in the exercise of my calling and in the fulfilment of my responsibilities. O Lord, increase my faith.

An Act of Hope

Jesus, my Saviour ! Thou art all my hope, all my trust. I am weak and sinful ; yet Thou hast called me to Thyself. I was so often despondent and disheartened, oppressed by care ;

Thou wilt extend to me Thy all-powerful Hand. Come to me, Lord, make me strong, make me pure, make me holy. I trust in Thee. In this trust I offer up to Thee all I am, all I have, all I do. O Lord, strengthen my hope.

An Act of Charity

My God and my All ! I love Thee. Out of Thy superabundant love Thou hast given this sacrament to us ! Host and Chalice, the Sacrifice of the Cross and the Sacrifice of the Mass and Thy divine love. Thou wouldst not leave us helpless and alone ; Thou wouldst be Brother and Saviour, Redeemer and Helper to us. Thy Heart was pierced for us. Hide me in Thy Heart, O Lord. Give me of Thy love that I also may love, that I may give myself to Thee out of love, that I may work and suffer, mortify myself and be silent, through love of Thee. Take unto Thy love, receive into Thy Heart, all Thou hast entrusted to me, all Thou hast bidden me to love. Let no manifestation of Thy love be lost on me. O Jesus, inflame my heart with the divine love with which Thou burnest.

An Ancient Prayer Before Communion.

I approach Thee, O Lord ! I come to Thy sanctuary. I am going to Thy holy Table which is so full of sweetness. O what precious gifts Thou hast in store for those who love Thee with their whole heart. Thou givest me the Bread of Angels that I may have eternal life, as Thou hast. What have I done to deserve that Thou O Lord dost prepare so divine a banquet for me? It would be too good for angels. Who am I, sinful and miserable that I am, that Thou, the King of Glory, shouldst enter under my roof?

I will exult with joy, my Lord and my God, and praise Thee on this solemn day in utter gladness. My soul will rejoice when my King enters. In Thy love Thou dost bring me a heavenly food that satisfies every need of my soul ; wondrous Bread from heaven, sweeter than honey to the taste.

Jesus, my Lord, with Thee is peace and blessing and overflowing consolation. Fill my heart, bless me, show me Thy great mercy.

Rejoice, my soul ! Thy God comes to meet

thee ; the Lord comes, thy Redeemer, thy Sanctifier, full of gentleness and gracious kindness. Go, my soul, and meet Him with childlike trust. Come, O Beloved, come, desire of my soul. Come, my heart is opened to Thee and a dwelling is prepared for Thee. Come, abide in me and may I abide in Thee. Come, almighty, living and true God. For Thee I live ; Thee I love ; I am Thine alone Amen.

THANKSGIVING AFTER COMMUNION

O Lord, I am but a sinful creature, yet Thou hast come to me. O, what consolation and joy fill my heart because my Redeemer has visited me. What grace He has imparted to me ! What goodness He has lavished on me ! My heart is replete with joy and gladness and wants nothing more. I have received fire and warmth from Thee and my spirit is inflamed with fervour. I will exult with the angels in heaven and rejoice all the days of my life. God is so loving. But how can I thank Thee, O Lord ? What can I give Thee that would be worthy of Thee ? I will

praise Thee, O Lord, with all my heart ; my soul, my heart, my mind will bless Thee to-day and every day of my life.

Yes, praise the Lord, ye heaven and earth, ye sun and stars, praise Him all of you. I will tell you what great things the Lord hath done for me. He has looked upon me in His mercy and fed me with Bread from heaven. Praise the Lord and magnify His name.

I have found Him Whom my soul loveth. I will hold fast to Thee, O Jesus ; I will not part with Thee before Thou hast blessed me. Thou art rich unto all who invoke Thy Name ; fill me with the precious treasures of Thy powerful grace that my soul may shine before Thee as the sun on this the day of Thy visitation.

May Thy Holy Spirit enkindle in me a burning fire, the fire of love, and may it grow stronger every day.

I will listen to Thy voice, O Jesus ! Thou hast the words of eternal life ; Thou art the Way, the Truth and the Life ! I will follow in Thy footsteps.

Draw me near to Thee, O My God, and let me be with Thee for ever. Abide in me and

enrich me with Thy love ; bind my heart in loving chains that I may always belong to Thee. I live, now not I, but Christ liveth in me. Amen.

Offering. Act of Devotion.

My Lord and my God ! take all from me that keeps me from Thee.

My Lord and my God ! give all to me that brings me to Thee.

My Lord and my God ! take me from myself and give me to Thyself alone.

Act of Petition

My God, my Lord ! In this moment of highest grace I ask Thee for all that I need to be true to Thee. Give me love, O Lord, that will transfigure all my trials ; give me faith, O Lord, that will strengthen me for all work in body and soul, in my calling and for my family. Give me confidence, O Lord, that will tide me over all weariness of life ; give me courage, O Lord, that I may be willing to endure every sacrifice for Thy sake.

Let me share my happiness and my grace with all whom Thou hast entrusted to me and

handed over to my care. Bless the child that awakens to life within me. Dispose it to virtue and goodness that it may spend its life serving Thee.

Bless all the children whom Thy fatherly love has given me ! lead them along the way of the commandments ; strengthen their good will ; guard them from all danger in body and soul ; grant that, when their life is over, they will all love and praise Thee for all eternity.

Bless my husband, O Lord, whom Thou hast given to me in the holy sacrament of Matrimony. Give both of us fortitude and kindness, understanding and love, that we may help one another to advance along the way that leads to Thee, our Father in heaven.

Bless all who are good to us ! our parents, our teachers, our friends, our relatives. O Lord, remain always in my heart ; remain always in our home. Abide always in our souls that they may never depart from Thee.

O Lord, make me patient, kind and loving ; make me ready to endure every sacrifice, make me courageous and strong.

En Ego

Behold, O kind and most sweet Jesus, I cast myself on my knees in Thy sight, and with the most fervent desire of my soul, I pray and



beseech Thee that Thou wouldst impress upon my heart lively sentiments of faith, hope and charity, with true repentance for my sins, and a firm desire of amendment, while with deep affection and grief of soul I ponder within myself and mentally contemplate Thy five precious wounds, having before my eyes that which David spoke in prophecy of Thee, O good Jesus : "They have pierced my hand and my feet ; they have numbered all my bones."

A Plenary indulgence may be gained by those who, after Holy Communion, recite this prayer before a picture or image of Jesus crucified, and say one Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory be to the Father for the Pope's intentions.

Prayer to Christ the King

O Christ Jesus, I confess that Thou art King of the universe. All that has been made has been created for Thee. Exercise to the full Thy rights over me.

I renew my Baptismal vows by renouncing Satan, all his works and all his pomps, and I promise to lead a good Christian life. And, more especially, I promise to secure, as far as lies in my name, the triumph of the rights of God and of Thy Church.

Divine Heart of Jesus, I offer Thee all my actions, poor though they be, with this intention, that all hearts may acknowledge Thy sacred Royalty and that the reign of Thy peace may thus be established throughout the entire universe. Amen.

Plenary Indulgence, once a day, on the usual conditions. (Sacred Penitentiary Apostolic, February 21st, 1923.)

Anima Christi

Soul of Christ, sanctify me.

Body of Christ, save me.

Blood of Christ, inebriate me.

Water flowing from the side of Christ,
purify me.

Passion of Christ, strengthen me.

O good Jesus, hear me.

Hide me within Thy wounds ;

Never permit me to be separated from
Thee.

From the malignant enemy defend me.

At the hour of my death call me.

And bid me to come to Thee,

That with Thy saints I may praise Thee.

For everlasting ages. Amen.

*(Indulgences : 300 days : If devoutly recited
after Holy Communion, seven years. Plenary :
under usual conditions, once a month, if said
each day for a whole month.)*

Spiritual Communion

O Loving Jesus ! how gladly would I now
approach Thy Table if I were only worthy!
How gladly would I receive this sweet mystery

of Thy love, if only I could ! Like unto the woman of Canaan I entreat Thee with my whole heart to give me but some of the crumbs that fall from Thy Table, that my poor soul may be refreshed and strengthened to keep in Thy grace all this day, to throw itself with greater energy into the task of doing good and to offer strenuous resistance to temptation. Grant me all this, O good Jesus, through Thy infinite love and mercy. Amen.

Advice for the Communion Day

Let your whole communion day be a thanksgiving. On this day nothing should be more present to your mind than the thought of Jesus whom you have borne within you.

On this day show a splendid cheerfulness to all at home. A grumbling communicant neither honours Christ the Lord nor gives comfort to the family. Let the members of your family see that your heart rejoices in the blessing you have received. You should be happy and bright, pleasant and obliging, so that all may wish you went to Communion every day—Communion, making such a

delightful change in you and making things so pleasant for them.

Be sure to sanctify your communion day with good works. Be kind and considerate to your neighbours, servants and fellow-creatures, be silent about their faults; do no one harm by a single word of yours.

Your tongue has touched the all-holy God.

Speak only words of love.

Speak words of kindness.

Speak words of consolation.

Speak words of thanks.

Who shall keep love in this world, if woman cannot ?

You are the guardian of the home.

You guard eternal light.

Your heart is love, your whole being is gentleness.

A woman's love can heal many wounds.

A MOTHER'S STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Meditation on the sufferings of Christ brings consolation and strength. Compare your task of bearing a cross with His bearing His Cross to Calvary. Listen, reflect and pray.

Before each Station say :

*We adore Thee, O Christ, and bless Thee ;
because by Thy Holy Cross Thou hast redeemed
the world.*

After each Station say :

*O Jesus, Who through love of me
Didst bear Thy Cross to Calvary,
In Thy sweet Mercy grant to me
To suffer and to die with Thee.*

1st Station : *Jesus is condemned to die.*

Sin has condemned Thee. The guilt of the world began in the Garden of Paradise. There was I condemned "in sorrow to bring forth children." All mothers' pain, all mothers' anguish is atonement for our guilt. I accept my suffering, O Lord, in silence as Thou in silence didst hear the sentence of Thy crucifixion. Thou didst suffer for me ; I shall suffer for Thee.

2nd Station : *Jesus is made to bear
His Cross.*

Thou didst foresee Thy Cross and Thou didst tremble with fear ; Thou didst sweat blood in Thy Soul's anguish. I, too, felt great anguish at the thought of my cross. The tiny infant I bear is Thy cross to me, but a sweet cross and a light burden ; for Thou goest before me, my dear Lord. So I follow in Thy path with all my heavy care, with all my burden, with the cross of my family, with the cross of my lamentable weakness. In Thy footsteps I walk, O Lord.

3rd Station : *Jesus falls the first time*

The Cross was heavy, the journey toilsome ; nowhere was help in sight, but Thou didst rise again to struggle on. The days are approaching when my courage will begin to falter. The way of a mother is often hard, but I will not give up half-way upon the journey. Thou didst give me grace for all my life. I offer that life to Thee with courage—for Thee and for all who are dear to me.

4th Station : *Jesus meets His afflicted Mother*

This meeting was a Mother's proof of love. It was hard to bear for both Mother and Son. Perfect resignation lay in that brief moment of meeting—He bore His Cross with loving willingness ; with like willingness she bore hers. So may I become a mother in the full sense of the word, a great mother ready to endure every sacrifice. So may I be to my husband when he is suffering pain ; so may I be to each child which calls to me in its soul's need. Grant me, O Lord, the womanly power to be to my children the model of the best of all mothers, Thy Mother, Mary.

5th Station : *Simon the Cyrenian helps Jesus to carry His Cross*

Thou didst accept help. Together with Simon Thou didst share the burden of the Cross. Thou didst give me another faithful Simon in the person of my husband. Yes, we are willing to bear together the burden of our family ; step by step with one another, for one another. The cross that one bears lovingly grows light.

6th Station : *Veronica wipes the face of Jesus*

She came with such great courage : through all the throng she came to Thee. Thou didst thank her with all Thy Heart. I will also see the hands stretched out to help me. They are many, my husband's and my children's; my neighbours' and my dear friends'—what good these have already done to me and mine! I will be grateful for all this help by being kind, gentle and sympathetic, when those who helped me are in need. May I so manifest in my life this heroic kindness before my children that, for long years after, they will bear in their soul, in their memory, the picture of a kind and loving mother.

7th Station : *Jesus falls a second time*

The long road has wearied Thee in spite of Simon's help. Yes, in one's inmost soul one is alone with one's cross—and that makes for weariness. But Thou art always at hand, O Lord. When Thou dost ask new sacrifices, impose fresh burdens and inflict more wounds Thou art always near, O Lord. Remind me of that nearness when I am inclined to forget

it, so that I may never allow myself to be crushed under the weight of my cross.

8th Station : *Jesus speaks to the daughters of Jerusalem*

Thou couldst have remained silent. Thou hadst enough to bear with Thy own burden. But Thou didst console them. O how may women in these troubled times carry their cross of bitter suffering ! They bear much heavier crosses than I, they live in much sorer need. I will look upon them. I will forget myself and help those who need my help. We, mothers, have all become sisters now in our common suffering.

9th Station. *Jesus falls the third time*

It was bitter, that fall—so near the journey's end. Thou hast used up so much of Thy strength ; Thou hast shed so much of Thy precious Blood. Is my lot somewhat like that when I must give strength for strength, blood for blood ? Ah, well, I will drink my chalice to the dregs, I will fulfil my mission to the end, as Thou hast destined it for me, to the

last ounce of my strength—for my child, for my family.

10th Station : *Jesus is stripped of His garments*

With this stripping Thou gavest up what was very precious to Thee—Thy dignity, the reserve of Thy most Holy Body. Have I, O Lord, shared the guilt of stripping Thee? Have I desecrated my holy marriage state? Let me wear to my last breath the holy garment of motherly reverence, the most pure robe of divine grace. Let my little child be adorned with this robe in holy Baptism.

11th Station : *Jesus is nailed to the Cross*

I hear the blows of the hammer ; I see Thy red Blood dropping. Thou art nailed for us ; to us ! Dearest Lord, bind me to Thy cross, hands and feet, heart and love, my free-will and my readiness for sacrifice. Take all for Thyself. Take me from myself and give me to Thyself. And all to whom I am attached—child, husband, family—I will lead them on to Thee by the sacrifice all my sufferings entail.

12th Station : *Jesus dies on the Cross*

Lamb of God ! Victim ! Saviour ! Thou hast forgiven Thy executioners, hast parted with Thy Mother, hast pardoned the penitent thief. Now all is finished. So should my life be spent for all who have need of me. In every child I give away a part of my life. And if Thou didst ask my whole life at once for a single child, willingly would I make the sacrifice for love of Thee. Only let Thy Mother, the Mother of Sorrows, stand a sister by my side as she stood a Mother at the foot of the Cross. O Lord, let not Thy Passion and Thy Death be endured in vain for any one of those I love.

13th Station : *Jesus is taken down from the Cross*

They give back to her her dead Son. Of her, Thou, O Lord, wast born ; by her Thou wast buried. May I become as Thy Blessed Mother, house and home, shelter and refuge for all mine, and if they come to me wounded, abandoned, bleeding, broken in spirit—I will receive them and bring them home to Thee.

14th Station : *Jesus is placed in the
Sepulchre.*

Thy Sepulchre is not comfortless, for Thou wilt rise up from it and wilt conquer death. Thou goest to the Father to prepare a place for us. I may have to shelter in the tomb all whom I love or they may have to put me in my grave. We will not be divided, for Thou, O Lord, wilt lead us all home to the Father. Then only is my mission in this world ended, then only will I prove myself to have been a good mother when I have brought them all to Thee, home to Heaven—through Thee, O Jesus, and by the way of the Cross, to the Father Who has placed me as a bearer of His love in this small dear world of my home. Amen.

Ah Jesus mine ;
What great pain
You have borne for me !
In want and woe
Until death
Thou didst suffer for me.

O Lamb of God !
On the tree of the Cross
Thou hast lived for me.
Grant to me
That I die for Thee
And live for Thee eternally.

A WIDOWED MOTHER BEFORE THE TABERNACLE
IN THE HOUR OF HER BEREAVEMENT

O Jesus, Thou art alone in Thy prison of love. I am now alone in that life through which my husband and I went together side by side. I bring Thee my heart, broken with sorrow ; my will, weighed down under the burden of care. The present is all sadness, the future charged with fear. We were together, my husband and I, to bring up our children . . . and two were not too many in a world, where it is so necessary that children be armed against the evils that lie in wait for them, though we could not hope that our darlings would never come up against them. But Thou didst give courage and confidence

to the widow of Naim. I unite my tears with those Thou didst shed by the tomb of Lazarus. I know that, if I believe, I shall see the glory of God. With Thee and for Thee, and for the dear one whom I mourn, I will bear with courage and resignation the cross that bears so heavily upon me now. Amen.

PART V

THE MOTHER IN HER HOME

Morning Prayer

Father or mother reading the page of the Bible
 open the child's book and read the first verse
 with him or her. May the Almighty God, Father
 Son and Holy Ghost bless and guard you.
 Amen.

Morning Offering

O God, Father of my children, send
 down Thy Spirit to guide and comfort them.
 For keeping me safe through the night.

*Whatsoever you shall ask
The Father in My Name,
that will I do.*

(John xiv. 13.)

DAILY PRAYERS

What a beautiful sight it is to see the whole family, kneeling before the crucifix, begin the day with prayer in common. The mother should take care that at least the young children should pray all together. The prayers which a good mother teaches the children in their earliest years remain dear to them their whole life long. Great care is to be bestowed on their choice.

Some suggested prayers and practices (apart from the usual Our Father, Hail Mary, Apostles' Creed, etc.) as the years of childhood pass by; some also that parents may avail themselves of.

Morning Prayers

Father or mother making the sign of the Cross over the children and sprinkling them with holy water says: "May the Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost bless and guard you. Amen."

Morning Offering

O my God, I offer all my thoughts, words and actions to Thee this day, and thank Thee for keeping me safe through the night.

Morning Greeting to Mary

Hail, holy Queen, Mother of mercy, hail ! our life, our sweetness, and our hope ! to thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve ; to thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping, in this valley of tears. Turn, then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy towards us, and after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

Pray for us, O holy Mother of God, that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Prayers to the Infant Jesus

From the earliest possible age children should be trained by their mother to know and to love the Infant Jesus. Nothing is more sure of a blessing from Jesus Himself. He lives within them and His divine grace will enlighten their minds and warm their hearts with true affection for Him.

The good mother will always strive to have the love of the Divine Babe in her heart.

Infant Jesus, meek and mild,
Look on me a little child.
Pity mine and pity me
And suffer me to come to Thee.

Dear Child divine
Sweet Brother mine.
Be with me all day.

And when the light
Has turned to night
Be with me still, I pray.

Where'er I be
Come Thou with me
And never go away. Amen.

Infant Jesus, do not cry
For I will really, really try
Never to hurt Thee any more.
Never to make Thy dear Heart sore.

Little Child come to me.
Little Child Jesus, stay with me.
Make a good child of poor wee me.
My heart is so small

Thou fillest it all
And there is room for no one
but only Thee.
Dear little Jesus come and
stay with me.

Eyes of Jesus, look on me
Lips of Jesus, smile on me
Hands of Jesus, bless me.
Feet of Jesus, guide me.
Heart of Jesus, love me.
Spirit of Jesus, abide with me
Now and for evermore. Amen.

Father, we thank Thee for the night
And for the pleasant morning light,
For rest and food and loving care
And all that makes the world so fair.

Help us to do the things we should,
To be to others kind and good ;
In all we do, in all we say
To grow more loving every day.

Prayer to the Holy Ghost

Devotion to the Holy Ghost is encouraged greatly by successive Supreme Pontiffs as one of the most necessary and most salutary of all devotions.

Come, Holy Ghost ; fill the hearts of Thy Faithful and enkindle in them the fire of Thy love.

℣. Send forth Thy Spirit and they shall be created.

℟. And Thou shall renew the face of the earth.

Let us pray

O God, Who by the light of the Holy Spirit didst instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Spirit, we may relish what is right and ever rejoice in His consolation. Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

An indulgence of five years. A Plenary indulgence on the usual conditions, when recited each day for a month.

or

Seven Glorias to obtain the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost.

(Either of these prayers ought to be said once a week, if not every day).

Prayer When the Clock Strikes

From mortal sin, O Lord, deliver me. (*St. Joseph Cottolengo asked every penitent of his to say this ejaculation every hour. The results were marvellous in the way of amendment of life.*)

or

Jesus, this hour I give to Thee,
For all the past, O pardon me.
I know my soul must soon depart
So hide me in Thy Sacred Heart.

Angel Guardian

To awaken a child's ever-growing faith in and love for his Guardian Angel should be the earnest desire and set purpose of every mother. Devotion to our Guardian Angel awakens a great love of holy purity.

O Angel of God, my guardian dear
To whom His love commits me here,
Ever this day (night) be at my side
To light and guard, to rule and guide.

It is an excellent practice to add on this prayer each time one says the Angelus or Regina Coeli. Until the child is able to say these prayers by heart the recitation of five Hail Marys when the angelus bell rings will do instead.

Our present Holy Father says three Glory be to the Fathers after the Angelus to make reparation for the blasphemies committed against each one of the Divine Persons.

A custom has long existed of adding the three Glory be to the Fathers in thanksgiving for the privileges conferred on Our Blessed Lady and by way of petition for the declaration of the dogma of the Assumption.

Prayer of St. Nicholas of Flüe

(Patron Saint of Switzerland, canonised in 1947)

O my Lord and my God,
Take from me all that keeps me from Thee.
O my Lord and my God,
Give me all that brings me to Thee.
O my Lord and my God,
Take me from myself and make me
wholly to be Thine.

Grace Before Meals

The Sign of the Cross *is made before and after the prayer :*

Bless us, O Lord, and these Thy gifts which of Thy bounty we are about to receive. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Grace After Meals

The Sign of the Cross *is made before and after the prayer :*

We give Thee thanks, O Almighty God, for all Thy benefits. Who livest and reignest, world without end. Amen.

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

Night Prayers

(Apart from, and as an alternative to, the usual Our Father, Hail Mary, Apostles' Creed, Confiteor, and Act of Contrition, etc.) *When the family are assembled one of them will say :*

“Pray, father, a blessing.”

The father will answer :

“ The Lord Almighty, grant us a
quiet night and a perfect end.”

All answer :

“ Amen.”

Examination of Conscience

Here a few moments are devoted to the silent consideration of the sins that have been committed during the day, of the intentions one had in performing the day's tasks. Pardon is asked of God and a firm purpose of amendment is made.

The evening examination of conscience should never be omitted : it is the best preparation for a happy death.

The mother should help the little ones in thinking over their faults and then in expressing sorrow for them. One should never go to bed without making an Act of Perfect Contrition : a glance at the crucifix and a brief contemplation of Our Lord's sufferings will inspire in us the love that is needed and will move us to make the purpose of amendment.

The Sacred Penitentiary on January 13th, 1921, approved of the following English version of the Act of Contrition :

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee, because Thou art so very good and I firmly purpose by the help of Thy grace not to offend Thee again. (200 days indulgence.)

Family Rosary

The family Rosary should be recited in every Catholic home. Nothing is more calculated to foster the love of God and devotion to Mary, to unite husband and wife in love and fasten ever closer the bonds that unite them to their children and the children to one another. It helps in an extraordinary degree to lessen the bitterness of sorrow and to purify family joys.

Children should be trained to the practice from their early years and, as they grow up and become young men and young women, a time suitable for them should be chosen every evening. To be home for the family rosary is one of the surest safeguards of purity and good morals. The family rosary is found more attractive when no additional prayers (at least of any great length) are added.

THE ROSARY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

The Joyful Mysteries

Appropriate to Advent in general ; said on the feasts of the Nativity, 25th December ; Circumcision, 1st January, and Epiphany of our Lord, 6th January ; Annunciation, 25th March, Visitation, 2nd July ; Purification of our Blessed Lady, 2nd February ; and, as a rule, on Mondays and Thursdays through the year.

1st Mystery—The Annunciation of the
Blessed Virgin Mary.

2nd Mystery—The Visitation of the Blessed
Virgin Mary.

3rd Mystery—The Nativity of our Lord.

4th Mystery—The Presentation of the Child
Jesus.

5th Mystery—The Finding of the Child
Jesus in the Temple.

The Sorrowful Mysteries

Appropriate to Lent in general ; said on the feasts of the Finding of the Holy Cross, 3rd May ; Exaltation of the Holy Cross, 14th September ; feasts of the Seven Dolours of the Blessed Virgin

Mary, 15th September, and the Friday after Passion Sunday; as a rule on the Tuesdays and Fridays throughout the year.

1st Mystery—The Agony in the Garden.

2nd Mystery—The Scourging at the Pillar.

3rd Mystery—The Crowning with Thorns.

4th Mystery—The Carrying of the Cross by
Jesus.

5th Mystery—The Crucifixion.

The Glorious Mysteries

Appropriate to Paschal time in general; said on Ascension Thursday; on the feasts of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, 15th August and All Saints, 1st November; as a rule, on Sundays, Wednesdays and Saturdays throughout the year.

1st Mystery—The Resurrection of our Lord
Jesus Christ.

2nd Mystery—The Ascension.

3rd Mystery—The Descent of the Holy
Ghost.

4th Mystery—The Assumption of the
Blessed Virgin Mary.

5th Mystery—The Coronation of the Blessed
Virgin Mary.

In the evening we should be mindful of the souls in Purgatory, pray for God's blessing upon our country, for the peace of the world, for the conversion of sinners and for the propagation of the Faith. All these intentions may be prayed for during the recitation of the family rosary.

One may end the night prayers with the ejaculation

Praised be Jesus Christ.

To which the answer is :

For ever, Amen.

And when one is in bed one may say :

Into Thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.

Lord Jesus, receive my soul.

A CHILD'S PRAYER-BOOK.

The children should, as soon as possible, be provided with a prayer-book and taught to follow the Mass step by step with the priest.¹ In this way love for the Mass—one of the greatest blessings—will be inculcated in them and reverence for holy things will grow in their hearts.

¹ e.g., *Holy Childhood* (Eason & Son, Ltd.)

They should be encouraged also to use the prayer-book for Confession and Communion.

PREPARING A CHILD FOR FIRST CONFESSION AND FIRST COMMUNION

A child must acquire a knowledge of the mysteries of our religion proportionate to its age.

Plan Suggested by Pope Pius X

“I would ask the child to make the Sign of the Cross frequently and reverently and thus teach him the Mystery of the Most Holy Trinity.

“I would bring him to the Crib and teach him to pray to the Infant Babe and so introduce him to the Mystery of the Incarnation.

“I would show him the crucifix and thus teach him the Mystery of the Redemption.

“I would point to the Tabernacle and tell him that Jesus lives there and thus teach him the Mystery of the Eucharist.

“I would teach him no formal Catechism, but would ask him to recite the *Our Father*,

the *Hail Mary*, the *Apostles' Creed* reverently and often.

“By those acts, frequently repeated, he would have all the instructions necessary for his first Confession and Communion.”

CATHOLIC CUSTOMS

It is for parents to observe old Catholic customs that are sanctioned and approved of through the ages and to hand them on to their children, for such customs help in great degree to quicken faith and to act as a counterpoise to the materialistic conventions of modern times.

The Light of the Blessed Candles Along the Years.

The Sacraments are the greatest sources of the divine grace which gives supernatural life to the soul. As symbols of this inward grace the Church makes use of lighted and blessed candles. Mothers should treasure those candles ; with them their children come in

touch with the stream of grace, partake of it and give thanks to God for it.

Baptism

The baptismal candle reminds the child of the light of sanctifying grace (see Baptism, p. 71). The mother should preserve the candle used at the baptism of each child. On the anniversary of the baptismal day (or, less appropriately, the birthday) it is brought out from the press and lighted on the family altar, the whole family saying a prayer before it. The child and the rest of the family thank God for all His benefits towards them. In the flame of this candle all hear the warning : " Child, guard thy light."

First Confession

The mother prepares the child in union with the priest and in line with his instruction on the great Sacrament. When the child goes to make its confession, his baptismal candle is lighted at home, before the cross of our suffering Saviour, pleading, as it were, for pardon for the child's sins.

First Communion

Here again the baptismal candle comes into use. It lights the way, as it were, of God into the soul of the child in its first union with Jesus Christ in His Sacrament of love. It suggests the eternal Light, when Christ sets up His Tabernacle in the soul of the child. As a candle lighting before the altar it symbolises that the child must offer up itself, its life and all its future as a sacrifice to God. At the renewal of the baptismal vows, which often takes place on the First Communion day, the candle serves as a witness of the renewal of those vows, which the child on the day of its baptism took in the person of its sponsors. On such a happy day should not the hearts of all the children burn before the family altar and give thanks to God?

Confirmation

In many places children bring their baptismal candles with them to the Confirmation ceremony for the renewal of the baptismal vows that takes place in many dioceses when the ceremony of Confirmation is over. Where

this practice does not prevail the candle should be lighting for a while on the home altar this day of the special grace of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost is an indispensable Helper, Adviser and Guide when mother and child consider together what the child's future is to be. The confirmation candle gives light, a reminder of the light of the Holy Ghost that illumined the Apostles on the day of Pentecost.

The Wedding Day

It is a beautiful and holy custom when the bridal couple on their wedding day have their baptismal and communion candles lighting on the altar before which they are to be wed. It is the same loving hand of God, which was stretched out to them at Baptism and Communion that now blesses their ring, blesses their joined hands and strengthens them for the way of married life along which they are now to travel.

Ordination (or Profession) Day.

Should one of the family be ordained to the

priesthood or make her profession as a nun—thus mounting the Calvary of highest sacrifice—let the lighted baptismal candle, or the blessed candle of the home, be on that greatest of days on the high altar as a sign of the last loving farewell to the family circle. It will serve at the same time as a prayer and as a warning never to forget the dear ones at home in offering the Holy Sacrifice or assisting at it.

At the Death-bed

The day one dies is called the third birthday—the first gave natural life, the second gave supernatural life (Baptism), the third (death) gives eternal life. The candle of life is slowly being extinguished, the baptismal candle or the blessed candle is burning low in the hand of the dying person, but soon God will bestow Perpetual Light.

So the grace of God, bright and clear, accompanies men through the pilgrimage of this world. *Deo gratias*: Thanks be to God.

THE CHURCH'S YEAR

Advent

Advent is a waiting. "Do penance, for the kingdom of God is at hand," is St. John the Baptist's warning. The family should be in a mind to wait, to prepare, to set their home and hearts in order for Christmas day. A mother must impress on the children with the deepest earnestness how holy and great is Christmas-tide. She will tell the young children of the Mother of God, of the Angel Gabriel, of St. Joseph, of the journey to Bethlehem, of the cave and the manger. A little crib could be easily erected in the home. All could help to make it or decorate it and all learn how to live from the story of the Holy Family.

In Ireland and elsewhere a candle or candles are lighted on Christmas night before a window, or before every window of the house, to symbolise the Light of the world that is to come really but mystically and to serve as an invitation to enter for any poor homeless traveller who may be seeking shelter from the

cold wintry blast. In the traveller they open their door to Jesus, as to Him they open their hearts at Communion on Christmas morning.

Christmas

What joy and gladness Christmas brings to children's hearts when mothers understand all it means to them. Even in the poorest house it is possible to gladden hearts before the manger. The family, where it is the custom, will go to midnight Mass. In any case the family will go to Mass together ; all, who are old enough, will kneel at the altar together for Holy Communion. On the way, as far as time permits, the mother will speak of the Christ-child, of the Shepherd, of the Angels, of Our Blessed Lady and St. Joseph.

At home they gather for a while around the crib, which will be lighted up, and pray to the Divine Babe and His Blessed Mother in thanksgiving and in fond petition for blessings on their home and on all within it.

The presents will be given out with cries of joy. The eyes of the children light up with gladness. Hands are longingly stretched out

as Daddy and Mammy hand the gifts—toys and all the good things that Mammy knows will be most welcomed ; and she will assure her children that the presents and the joys of Christmas come from the Infant Jesus and not from the Santa Claus that non-Catholic countries have put in His place. It is high time for us Catholics to get rid of the chimney sweep “Santy” and to teach the children to thank the Babe of Bethlehem for all the blessings that befall them and for all the holy joys He sends them.

Christmas should be a feast of unalloyed happiness. “Rejoice in the Lord”—rejoice with the gladness the presence of Jesus brings to the heart. It stirs in our hearts that spirit of fraternal charity which makes a heaven upon earth.

The Epiphany

In some districts in Ireland twelve candles are lighted in a room on the eve of the Epiphany which itself is called *Twelfth Day* (after Christmas).

The children should be told the story of the

Wise Men from the East bearing their gifts of gold, incense and myrrh. They should visit the crib in the parish church and their own crib should be completed at home. They should be reminded of the special presents of gold, incense and myrrh. They should be reminded of the special presents they should offer up to the Infant Jesus—instead of gold and silver they will give their heart, their love to the Divine Babe ; instead of incense they will offer up to Him their prayers and their faith firm and strong ; instead of myrrh they will offer up to Him their pains and troubles—their sufferings will be their bunch of myrrh.

Candlemas

The Church blesses on this day all the candles that are used on the altar throughout the year. Families should bring their candle. In every home there should be a blessed candle. It is lighted during severe thunderstorms, in time of great necessity, on occasion of a birth or a death in a home, in times of sickness, misfortune, etc., and other notable days while the family prayers are being said.

This light signifies the love of God, faith in God, readiness to endure the sacrifices that God may demand.

St. Blaise

(3rd February.)

In some churches it is the custom to give to their congregation the blessing of St. Blaise with candles. St. Blaise is one of the fourteen helpers in great need. He is especially invoked for the cure of sore throats.

Lent

A time of real earnestness and serious thought, a time of preparation for the Christian Pasch which is the commemoration of the Passion, Death and Resurrection of our Saviour. The mother knows how to suggest all this ; all are prepared to make some special sacrifices each day : no sweets during Lent, no smoking, no drinking of intoxicants, no "shows," no "pictures," eating less are common ways of entering into the spirit of Lent. The real fast is to abstain from sin in all its myriad forms. We must die to sin with

Christ upon the Cross that we may rise with Him to a new life of grace on Resurrection morning. A portion of the Passion of Our Lord may be read aloud in the family circle every day or every Sunday, at least. Daily Mass, daily or frequent Communion, the Stations of the Cross, evening Benediction, attendance at the retreats or missions are the favourite practices that fill the churches during this Holy Season.

Ash Wednesday

The time of penance begins. Ashes are blessed and put on the foreheads or strewn on the heads of the faithful in the form of a cross with the words : " Remember, man, that thou art dust and unto dust thou shalt return," to remind us of the shortness of human life and of death as a punishment for sin. The ceremony also serves as a mark of our sorrow for sin.

Palm Sunday

The procession on Palm Sunday, which the whole family, if possible, should witness, recalls and represents in dramatic form the triumphant

entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. Palm is the symbol of victory and triumph, and of virtue. Each member of the family should bring home a portion of palm which should be hung up in the bedroom. The Church in blessing the palms prays "that into whatever place they may be brought those who dwell in that place may obtain Thy blessing." On Ash Wednesday of the next year the various portions of palm should be burned.

Holy Week

Holy Week should be held in special reverence. The sorrow of the Church should find an echo in every home and in the heart of each member of it. Singing, music, dancing, junketing should be eschewed at least on Good Friday, if not during all the week.

Holy Thursday should be a general Communion day for each household and all the First Communion candles should be lighted on the home altar. A visit to the Altar of Repose should be paid by all in the house. To gain the indulgences attached to the visit six *Our Fathers*, *Hail Marys* and *Glorias* are to be said.

Good Friday

At three o'clock on Good Friday, the hour at which Our Lord died, if attendance at public devotions is not possible, the members of the family should keep silence for some time and pray before the crucifix. The little children should be prepared on mother's advice to make some little sacrifice for the dying Jesus Who died to open heaven for them. One should try on that day of sorrows to kneel at the foot of the Cross, recall all the sufferings of the past year—and thank Jesus for them.

Holy Saturday

At least one member of the family ought to attend the ceremonies of this day which are so rich in symbolism and so impressive in detail. They recall the twofold Resurrection—the Resurrection of Christ from the dead and the spiritual Resurrection of His Mystical Body. The Church offers up the Mass as a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving for the new children that have been born of her bosom at the baptismal font.

Easter Sunday

Easter Sunday ushers in the period of joy and gladness at Christ's victory, in His Resurrection, over sin and death and hell, and of our triumph in Christ. When we were baptised we were, so to say, buried in the font with Christ and rose from the font with Him in newness of life. On Easter Sunday and all Easter week we should return thanks to God for the graces of our Baptism. Before Baptism we were dead in original sin ; after Baptism we rose from sin and became " other Christs."

Ascension Thursday

On the day of the Ascension was accomplished the supreme glorification of Christ : Christ takes His place at the right hand of the Father to be sharer of His Throne and partaker of His glory. Christ ascended to prepare a place for us in heaven. One by one we ascend to it, if, while here on earth, we fight the good fight.

On this day the mother should speak to her children of Heaven and of the joys that await them, if they be obedient, pious and good.

Pentecost

In His Ascension Christ prepared for us a place in heaven. He sent the Holy Ghost to teach us how to gain that place and to strengthen us in our earthly struggle towards it. As members of the Church we are subject to His guidance and sanctifying power. The Spirit of God dwells in us as in His Temple. The mystery of His coming is renewed in us every Pentecost. And thus on that day it is incumbent upon us to thank the Holy Ghost for the wondrous graces and gifts He bestowed upon us when He came to us in a special way on the day of our Confirmation.

May

May is a time of special devotion to Our Blessed Lady all the world over. In every home every child should be taught to contribute to the decoration of the May altar in the house in honour of Mary, its Mother. The whole family should gather about it for some moments at least, each day or night, to thank Mary the Mother of Jesus, for all the favours she has won for them from her

Divine Son and to entreat her to bless the home and the family, to keep them all under the blue mantle of her maternal protection.

June

The month of the Sacred Heart is prepared for in May, the month of Mary. Through Mary we come to Jesus. All our devotion to her has one end and aim—to bring us into closer union with Jesus and to make our hearts like unto His. An admirable practice would be for the members of the family to join together at the altar at home and renew or initiate the consecration of the family to the Sacred Heart.

The Feast of Christ the King (*Last Sunday of October*)

This should be a day of real religious solemnity in the family. All should consecrate themselves to Christ the King in the public churches or at home by reciting the prayer to Christ the King (p. 197). It should be impressed upon the children how Christ should be said to reign over them ; over their minds that they may believe all that He has taught ;

over their wills that they may obey his commandments; over their hearts that no forbidden love or desire may stand between Him and them; over their bodies that these may serve to promote the holiness of their souls.

All Souls' Day

The family should ever be mindful of its dead. On All Souls' Day special thought and prayer are given to them. The *toties quoties* Indulgence should be availed of. Confession and Communion, visits to the church and the recitation at each visit of six *Our Fathers*, *Hail Marys* and *Glorias* should be the aim of all the family. In the evening time the mother will show photographs of dear ones that are gone and awaken in her children love and faithfulness beyond the grave.

CONSECRATION OF FAMILIES TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

Our Divine Saviour promised in His revelations to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque to bestow special blessings on those families who have a picture (or statue) of the Sacred Heart (not of the Heart

alone, of course) set up in a prominent place in their homes and consecrate themselves to His Sacred Heart. Catholic families, mindful of this promise, should have this picture (or statue) displayed in one of the principal rooms (very often the living-room is selected) and consecrate themselves as Our Lord has desired.

The Ceremony

The priest vested in surplice and white stole blesses the picture (or statue) of the Sacred Heart in the home in the prescribed form. He sprinkles the picture (or statue) with holy water and sets it up in a prominent place. Then all join in a united act of faith by reciting the Apostles' Creed. The priest may make a short discourse and finally with the whole family he recites the Act of Consecration as follows :

Sacred Heart of Jesus, Who didst manifest to Saint Margaret Mary the desire of reigning in Christian families, we come to-day to proclaim Thy most complete regal dominion over our own. We would live in future with Thy life, we would cause to flourish in our

midst those virtues to which Thou hast promised peace here below, we would banish far from us the spirit of the world which Thou hast cursed, and Thou shalt reign over our minds in the simplicity of our faith, and over our hearts by the whole-hearted love with which they shall burn for Thee, the flame of which we shall keep alive by the frequent reception of Thy divine Eucharist.

Deign, O divine Heart, to preside over our assemblings, to bless our enterprises both spiritual and temporal, to dispel our cares, to sanctify our joys, to alleviate our sufferings. If ever one or other of us should have the misfortune to afflict Thee, remind him, O Heart of Jesus, that Thou art good and merciful to the penitent sinner. And when the hour of separation strikes, when death shall come to cast mourning into our midst, we will all, both those who go and those who stay, be submissive to Thy eternal decrees. We will console ourselves with the thought that a day will come when the entire family reunited in Heaven, can sing for ever Thy glories and Thy mercies.

May the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and the glorious Patriarch Saint Joseph, present this consecration to Thee, and keep it in our minds all the days of our life. All glory to the Heart of Jesus, our King and our Father

The following indulgences are attached to the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart in the home :

(1) *An indulgence of seven years to all the members of the family who, at least contrite of heart, assist at the ceremony of the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart in their family.*

(2) *A plenary indulgence to the same, if having confessed and communicated on that day, they visit a church or public oratory and there pray for the intentions of the Holy Father.*

(3) *An indulgence of three years, if on the anniversary of the Enthronement they renew the consecration before the picture of the Sacred Heart.*

(4) *A plenary indulgence on the same day, if having confessed and communicated, they renew their Act of Consecration and then visit a church or public oratory, praying there for the intentions of the Holy Father.*

CONSECRATION TO THE HOLY FAMILY

O Jesus our Most Loving Redeemer, who didst come to enlighten the world by Thy teaching and example and didst will to pass the greater part of Thy life humbly subject to Mary and Joseph in a poor home in Nazareth—thus sanctifying the Family, which was to serve as a model for all Christian families—graciously receive our family, which consecrates and dedicates itself to Thee this day. Do Thou protect us, keep guard over us and establish in our midst Thy holy fear, true peace and concord in Christian charity; so that conforming ourselves to the divine model of Thy family we may be able, all of us without exception, to attain eternal happiness.

O Mary, dear Mother of Jesus and our Mother, make our humble offering of ourselves acceptable to Jesus, by Thy loving intercession and obtain for us His graces and blessings.

O St. Joseph, most holy guardian of Jesus and Mary, help us by thy prayers in all our spiritual and temporal necessities, so that we may be

enabled to praise our divine Saviour Jesus, together with Mary and thee, for all eternity.

Our Father, Hail Mary and Gloria (three times). *An indulgence of 500 days.*

A plenary indulgence on the usual conditions if this prayer is said each day for a month.

Jesus, Joseph and Mary, I give you my heart and soul.

Jesus, Joseph and Mary, assist me in my last agony.

Jesus, Joseph and Mary, may I breathe forth my soul in peace with you.

An indulgence of seven years for each of these three invocations. A plenary indulgence once a month on the usual conditions for the recitation of any one of these invocations each day.

Prayer to St. Joseph

O Joseph, foster father of Jesus, most pure Spouse of the Virgin Mary, pray every day for us to the same Jesus, the Son of God, that we, through the power of His grace and our

constant effort to live according to His law, may be crowned by Him at the hour of our death. *An indulgence of 500 days.* (Pius X composed this prayer.)

Family Devotion to St. Joseph

O St. Joseph, illustrious scion of the royal House of David : Thou wast chosen by the redeeming mercy of God to be the Bridegroom of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God. It was thy task to support and to watch over her Divine Child. In the spirit of humility and of sacrifice, through thy trust in God and thy unselfish devotion thou didst fulfil thy exalted duty and thus didst co-operate in preparing for the Redeemer of the world His way to mankind.

St. Joseph ! obtain for fathers courage to endure all that is demanded of them. Let them see in every wife and mother an image of Mary, the Mother of God, that they may show forth towards them the spirit of reverence and of chivalry. Give fidelity to their married life, blessing to their labours and grace to guide those entrusted to their care.

St. Joseph, protect our home. Give strength and courage to fathers, inspire all families with the fear of God and rain down upon them blessings from heaven.

The words of the angel of God is directed to parents : " Father, mother, take the child which the heavenly Father has entrusted to thee." The world makes it hard for parents to give joyous consent : St. Joseph, strengthen their good will that sorrow and care may not weaken it. Let all the faithful, who do their duty gladly in the spirit of sacrifice, partake of that happiness of domestic life which characterised the home of Nazareth.

St. Joseph, guard our home. Give strength and courage to fathers, inspire all families with the fear of God and rain down blessings upon them from heaven.

Great is the anxiety about daily food, clothes, the maintenance of the home, the future and the livelihood of the children. Do not let our fathers and hard-working mothers break down under their cross. Give them joy in their laborious daily tasks, give them peace in the divinely consecrated day of the Lord. And

let them never forget that every good deed is written down in the Book of Life.

St. Joseph ! Watch over our home. Give strength and courage to fathers and inspire all families with the fear of God and rain down blessings on them from heaven.

Temptation and bad company, the spirit of the world, the bad conduct in the streets and along the roads, books and pictures and bad conversation bring worse danger to our children than did the dagger of Herod to the Holy Innocents. Spread thy protecting mantle around the hearts of our children that they may never be poisoned by the foul breath of sin. Bless the warning word of parents, grant that fathers may stand out before their children as models of faithfulness to God and of strict fulfilment of duty so that in every house in our parish there may spring up a people endowed with the grace of God and the spirit of fortitude.

Hail, holy Joseph, hail !

Chaste spouse of Mary, hail !

Pure as the lily flower

In Eden's peaceful vale

Hail, holy Joseph, hail !
Father of Christ esteemed.
Father be thou to those
Thy Foster Son redeemed.

The Mother's Prayer for Her Children

O divine Child, Thou lover of children and most perfect model, I, an anxious mother, come to entreat Thee. O, be a protector and a saviour to my children in all dangers to body and soul. Jesus, Innocence itself, keep them in the holy innocence of their hearts and in Thy divine grace. Most holy Jesus, be pleased to turn them away from all sin and all that may lead them to sin. Most loving Jesus, guard them from all dangers to their soul. Most obedient Jesus, make them love to obey and eager to learn. Give my children the grace to advance like Thee in wisdom and age, in knowledge and virtue before God and man. But, O divine Child, help me, too, that I may shrink from no sacrifice or trouble to bring them up in the fear and love of God and to save them from all evil influence.

Divine Child, I make petition to Thee through all the love and all the pain which Thy Mother Mary offered up in sacrifice with Thee and for Thee.

Infant Jesus, eternal, almighty God, bless, preserve and protect me and my children. Amen.

Prayer for Fraternal Charity

O Lord, Who dost send us to every man; for Thou hast made every man our neighbour.

Give us for one another
The look of love,
The right word,
The helpful deed.

Help us to give one another what we respectively stand in need of, as Thou dost distribute the bread the corn for which ripens under the sun. We pray to Thee for our children and all who are related or entrusted to us. We pray to Thee for all, be they near or far away, who are dear to our hearts.

We pray to Thee for all men who do the kind of work we do. We pray for all members of our community,

For the healthy and the sick,
For the glad and the sad,
For the good and the bad,
For the strong and the weak,
And for their salvation.

Lord we believe, help our unbelief. Amen.

A Home Blessing

Where faith is, there is love,
Where love is, there is peace.
Where peace is, there is God.
Where God is, there is no want.

Prayer for a Son or Daughter leaving home
for school, for employment.

Heavenly Father, I must give my child over to new people and to a new world. How glad I am, now that Thou art the Father over my child in all his (her) ways. When I can no longer follow him (her) Thou canst reach him (her) with Thy paternal love and kindness

and with Thy all-powerful protection. I ask of Thee, O Lord, to warn him (her) when he (she) is inclined to go astray ; watch over him (her) as I did in his (her) childhood days. Hold him (her) by Thy hand, now that I must let him (her) go out into the world, so that he (she) may remain good, may never leave the path of Thy commandments and may always find a home in Thy loving Heart.

Relieve me of my maternal anxiety, O Lord. I place my trust in Thee and thank Thee because Thou art the best of all fathers. May my blessing be with my child every day and may he (she) be always under Thy protection.

And thou Mary, Refuge and Shield, and Star of the Sea, be a mother to my child ; in all confidence I give him (her) into thy loving arms. Remember thou are a **Mother** to us all.

O Guardian Angel, let our child be given over to thee, accompany him (her) in all his (her) ways as the Archangel Raphael accompanied Tobias to a strange land, and lead him (her) home in grace to his (her) father's home and to the Home of the eternal God.

Prayer for Patience and Meekness

Divine Saviour, Thou didst spend three years with Thy disciples as a father with his children ; Thou hast put up with their imperfections and failings in all meekness. Be gracious towards me, Thy poor servant, with all my imperfections and my want of patience. I hear Thy words : " Learn of me because I am meek and humble of heart." Thou dost know how hard it is for me to live up to those words, Help me, meek and loving Lord, to overcome, through love of Thee, all irritation and impatience, all anger and urge to violent speech. Let me not break out into a passion at the faults and shortcomings of my children. Take all my powers and entire will into Thy hands, that I may never punish in anger and that I may give all necessary correction without harshness and without passion. Patient Jesus, meek and humble of heart, make my heart like unto Thine.

A Mother's Daily Prayer for Her Children

O Mary, Immaculate Virgin and Mother of Sorrow, speak of my children to the

adorable Heart of Jesus, Who can refuse His Mother nothing ; pray for them.

Holy Guardian Angel, pray for them,

St. Joseph, powerful Protector, pray for them,

St. John, thou well-beloved disciple of the Lord, pray for them,

St. Augustine, pray for them,

St. Aloysius, pray for them,

St. Anne, pray for them,

St. Monica, pray for them. Amen.

Prayer on the Anniversary of the Wedding Day

Most loving God, it is to-day . . . years since Thou didst call me in the holy sacrament of Matrimony to the vocation of a mother. It was Thy will and Thy divine Providence that led me before the altar. I thank Thee to-day, O heavenly Father, for the unnumbered graces, joys and blessings that were bestowed on me that day and, if I have had to sacrifice myself and take upon myself trouble and sorrow, pain and worry, I thank

Thee to-day for all those crosses. They were proofs of Thy love ; and out of love for Thee I bear them. That love is alone true which is ready to make sacrifices.

I renew to-day all the promises I made in the gladness of my heart that day, all the praises I offered Thee and the consecration of myself which I made. Accept, moreover, all that I have done to serve my dear husband, my children, my family, my neighbours and my people. Bless my hands that they may impart blessing ; increase my chastity and my fidelity that they may prove a shield and protection for my family ; sanctify my heart ; give me wisdom, kindness and love in Thy exalted service, that I may show forth goodness in all I do for those, whom Thy fatherly love has entrusted to my care.

Pardon me for all wherein I have been at fault ; supply by Thy grace what I have left undone ; give Thy blessing to all that I have done, though it has been poor ; accept all that I have humbly and willingly offered up to Thee. And what lies before me in years, in work, in cares, in joys, I dedicate

to Thee to-day and hand over for all my life
to Thee, God on high, most loving, most wise,
most merciful Father of all families and of all
men. Amen.

LITANY OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ have mercy on us.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, hear us.

Christ, graciously hear us.

God, the Father of Heaven.

God, the Son, Redeemer of the world.

God, the Holy Ghost,

Holy Trinity, one God,

Heart of Jesus, Son of the Eternal Father,

Heart of Jesus, formed in the womb of the

Virgin Mother by the Holy Ghost,

Heart of Jesus, united substantially with the

Word of God,

Heart of Jesus, of infinite Majesty,

Heart of Jesus, holy temple of God,

Have mercy on us.

Heart of Jesus, tabernacle of the Most
High,
Heart of Jesus, house of God and gate of
Heaven,
Heart of Jesus, glowing furnace of charity,
Heart of Jesus, vessel of justice and love,
Heart of Jesus, full of goodness and love,
Heart of Jesus, abyss of all virtues,
Heart of Jesus, most worthy of all praise,
Heart of Jesus, king and centre of all hearts,
Heart of Jesus, in whom are all the trea-
sures of wisdom and knowledge,
Heart of Jesus, in whom dwells all the
fulness of the Godhead,
Heart of Jesus, in whom the Father is well
pleased,
Heart of Jesus, of whose fulness we all have
received,
Heart of Jesus, desire of everlasting hills,
Heart of Jesus, patient and full of mercy,
Heart of Jesus, rich unto all who call upon
Thee,
Heart of Jesus, source of life and holiness,
Heart of Jesus, propitiation for our sins,
Heart of Jesus, filled with reproaches,

Have mercy on us.

Heart of Jesus, bruised for our crimes,
 Heart of Jesus, made obedient even unto
 death,
 Heart of Jesus, pierced with a lance,
 Heart of Jesus, source of all consolation,
 Heart of Jesus, our life and our resurrection
 Heart of Jesus, our peace and our reconcili-
 ation,
 Heart of Jesus, victim for sinners,
 Heart of Jesus, salvation of those who
 trust in Thee,
 Heart of Jesus, delight of all saints,

Have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of
 the world,

Spare us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the
 world,

Graciously hear us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the
 world,

Have mercy on us.

℣. Jesus, meek and humble of heart.

℞. Make our hearts like unto Thine

Let us pray

Almighty and eternal God, look upon the Heart of Thy most beloved Son, and upon the praise and atonement He rendered Thee on the part of sinners ; and, being appeased thereby, grant pardon to those who crave Thy mercy in the name of the same Jesus Christ, Thy Son, who liveth and reigneth with Thee for ever. Amen.

LITANY OF LORETO

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, have mercy on us.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, hear us,

Christ, graciously hear us.

God, the Father of heaven,

Have mercy on us.

God, the Son, Redeemer of the world,

Have mercy on us.

God, the Holy Ghost,

Have mercy on us.

Holy Trinity, one God,

Have mercy on us.

Holy Mary,
Holy Mother of God,
Holy Virgin of virgins,
Mother of Christ,
Mother of Divine grace,
Mother most pure,
Mother most chaste,
Mother inviolate,
Mother undefiled,
Mother most amiable,
Mother most admirable,
Mother of good counsel,
Mother of our Creator,
Mother of our Saviour,
Virgin most prudent,
Virgin most venerable,
Virgin most renowned,
Virgin most powerful,
Virgin most merciful,
Virgin most faithful,
Mirror of justice,
Seat of wisdom,
Cause of our joy,
Spiritual vessel,
Vessel of honour,

Pray for us.

Singular vessel of devotion,
Mystical rose,
Tower of David,
Tower of ivory,
House of gold,
Ark of the covenant,
Gate of Heaven,
Morning star,
Health of the sick,
Refuge of sinners,
Comforter of the afflicted,
Help of Christians,
Queen of Angels,
Queen of Patriarchs,
Queen of Prophets,
Queen of Apostles,
Queen of Martyrs,
Queen of Confessors,
Queen of Virgins,
Queen of all Saints,
Queen conceived without original sin,
Queen of the most holy Rosary,
Queen of peace,

Pray for us.

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world,

Spare us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world,

Graciously hear us, O Lord

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world,

Have mercy on us.

℣. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

R/. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray

Grant, we beseech Thee, O Lord, that we, Thy servants, may enjoy unfailing health of mind and body, and that, through the glorious intercession of Blessed Mary, ever Virgin, we may be saved from present sorrow and be given to share in everlasting joy. Through Christ our Lord.

R/. Amen.

LITANY OF ST. JOSEPH

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, have mercy on us.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, hear us,

Christ, graciously hear us.

God, the Father of Heaven,

Have mercy on us.

God, the Son, Redeemer of the World,

Have mercy on us.

God, the Holy Ghost,

Have mercy on us.

Holy Trinity, one God,

Have mercy on us.

Holy Mary,

St. Joseph,

Illustrious descendant of David,

Light of Patriarchs,

Spouse of the Mother of God,

Chaste guardian of the Virgin,

Foster-father of the Son of God,

Zealous defender of Christ,

Head of the Holy Family,

Joseph, most just.

Pray for us.

Joseph, most chaste,
 Joseph, most prudent,
 Joseph, most valiant,
 Joseph, most obedient,
 Joseph, most faithful,
 Mirror of patience,
 Lover of poverty,
 Model of workers,
 Glory of family life,
 Guardian of virgins,
 Mainstay of families,
 Solace of the unfortunate,
 Hope of the sick,
 Patron of the dying,
 Terror of demons,
 Protector of holy Church,

Pray for us.

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of
 the world,

Spare us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the
 world,

Graciously hear us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world,

Have mercy on us.

℣. He made him master of his house.

℞. And ruler of all his possessions.

Let us pray.

O God, who in Thine ineffable providence didst vouchsafe to choose Blessed Joseph to be the spouse of Thy most holy Mother, grant, we beseech Thee, that we may deserve to have him for our intercessor in heaven, whom on earth we venerate as our holy protector, Who livest and reignest for ever.

Amen.

APPENDIX I

Brief Extracts from the Addresses of His Holiness Pope Pius XII to the newly wed.¹

MINISTERS OF THE SACRAMENT

The bridal couple are the true ministers of the Sacrament of Marriage. By them, in this sacrament, the life of grace and the life of bodies are communicated. In both God wills to depend on their free consent, for which nothing else can supply and which is heavy with responsibility. Be faithful to the purpose of marriage in submitting yourselves to the law of God and being the instruments of Divine Providence.

THE MARRIAGE BOND

The conjugal bond, one and indissoluble in every marriage, is more emphatically so in sacramental marriage. The Church itself cannot dissolve a marriage which it has declared to be valid—except when there is no sacrament or no consummation—because Christ has re-established marriage, raising

¹cf. Papst Pius XII: *Eheleben und Familien-Glück*. Rex-Verlag, Luzern.

cf. P.P. Pius XII: *Discours aux jeunes époux*. Editions de l'Œuvre Saint-Augustin, Saint Maurice.

it to the dignity of a sacrament. The bond of marriage, painful sometimes, assures the happiness of Christian and eternal life : what noble dignity it gives to Christian spouses ! Answering to the needs of human nature, that is, to the aspirations of the human heart, it safeguards that same human nature. Divorce mocks at the dignity of the spouses and destroys the life and the happiness of conjugal and family union. It is a loss for the children, for the Church and for the State.

CONJUGAL FIDELITY

The indissolubility of marriage as a contract may appear a cold thing, but it has a soul—fidelity. That, more exacting than the contract, is also more sweet because it is love which commands it. It is the religious regard for the gift of oneself, body, mind and heart.

THE ENEMIES OF INDISSOLUBILITY

Selfishness on the part of spouses destroys all happiness in the home . . . Guard your union from the evils of the day. . . . The great evil is self-love, not the just love of oneself but the **perverse** love of oneself—the root of all iniquity, the nourisher of all evil passion. . . . for the happiness of your home crush self-love. . . .

. . . Delicate as it is, true fidelity is incompatible with the licence of present-day life. . . . Distrust sympathy from strangers. It can deliver you bit by bit into the hands of a stranger at your partner's expense. . . . If the mind be won over, the heart will follow and then, no matter what the world or the poets say, there is only the pretence of fidelity.

OTHER ROCKS AHEAD:

1. The fast plays and shows, the new novels, now in vogue, which are so fatal to the emotions and to the imagination, and so remote from real life.
2. An excessive austerity which casts a gloom over the home and breeds perilous reactions.
3. Jealousy.

Trials of Married Life

1. That betrayal of one's spouse, which is brought about by passing *liaisons* and which leads either to the breaking up of a home or to terrible unhappiness in it. "It is only the patience of charity, especially if it is crowned by heroic forgiveness, that can win back the guilty one."
2. Difference of view regarding conjugal morality. Here there is only one remedy—prayer and the generosity of faithful and devoted love.

3. The necessary cessation of co-habitation, especially when the state of health of one party exacts perfect continence and demands the high degree of fraternal charity that actuated the good Samaritan.

*The Christian Home and the Virtues on which
it is Founded*

The home is not a forsaken, cold, desolate, silent, dark dwelling, empty of the serene and warm light of common and domestic life. It is the point at which are focused and from which radiate the qualities, the gifts, the talents which are in part the heritage of two lines of ancestors and in part the fruit of labour, effort and struggle. The most precious are the virtues which the charity of the Holy Ghost—pure, benevolent charity—infuses in human nature. Developed by the practice of a Christian life they are sanctified and elevated by grace to the supernatural order and lead to the full divine life.

The virtues, even the infused ones, resemble natural flowers: they need most particular care. Sown by Baptism in the soil of human nature they demand the collaboration of father and mother for their cultivation. For this end the parents must cultivate their own virtues and preserve their home

from all dangerous influences ; they must bring to it the life of grace and work incessantly to promote the interests of their children's souls.

The light of faith assures to the home a wonderful beauty and effects an indescribable consolation in times of mourning.

Just as the mother and the children give firm adhesion to the father's word, so, in the same way, let you receive the revealed word of Christ, the Church assisting, and give to it a perfect adhesion.

The intimate union of your home depends on faith enlightened by prayer and shown forth in your life.

AUTHORITY IN THE FAMILY :

Modern life tends to make woman the equal of man to the loss of the husband's authority and in opposition to the teaching of Christ. In the life of grace the spouses are equal ; but in the life of the family, the wife is subject to her husband, and that by her free consent. Husbands, exercise your authority, but in love ; wives, obey with love and with a just independence of conscience : this sacrifice strengthens the intimate union of the home.

Let parents, conscious and proud of their delicate mission, join to the right of commanding the art of

securing obedience. The natural gift of commanding tempered by affection assures success ; authority, subject to duty and unimpaired by prejudice and caprice, will win obedience. Children have their eyes wide open and are sharp. Parents must therefore be careful of what they say ; they must be united and must be firm with their children from their tenderest years.

The authority of paternal love, united to the authority of example, will be for the children an undying memory.

COLLABORATION OF THE SPOUSES IN FAMILY LIFE

The burden of life, lightened by the yoke of grace, becomes in marriage the common charge of the spouses in a real and intimate collaboration, realised by unity of thought, of will and of action, especially in the spiritual education of their children.

The husband whose task it is to secure the means of support for the family by the exercise of foresight and prudence must be vividly conscious of his responsibility towards his own household. His good name and reputation are of paramount importance to his family. The delicate attention of the husband alone assures to the mother loving respect in the home. Let him bestow on her a manly love and a tender regard.

The *wife* makes or mars the home.

Family life requires a spiritual home and it is from the wife that it derives its living and sweet reality.

Spouse and mother she is the sunlight and the joy of the domestic hearth. Wives, fulfil your task without counting the cost in self-sacrifice.

THE HEROISM OF CHRISTIAN SPOUSES

In the hidden life of the home family heroism is displayed which does not fear comparison with courage in the battlefield—especially, if the young spouses wish to observe the inviolable laws of marriage—a task rendered difficult by the circumstances of the hour. It demands from them that the Christian sense of duty and a joyous and courageous confidence must mount in their soul—a sense of duty and a confidence which are not only the best of prayers but go to form the very foundation of the Christian home.

THE PART OF GOD

God, in the creation of children, demands the co-operation of the parents : but it sometimes happens that Christ comes to demand from the family God's share, that is to say, He chooses a son or a daughter to be His priest or His nun.

If God does one day honour you by asking you to give a son or a daughter to His service, know,

as true Christians who are well aware of the grandeur and the loftiness of the faith in the divine government of families and of the Church, how to appreciate the value and the privilege of such a grace for the son or daughter, whom He has chosen, as well as for yourselves and your family.

Be you happy within the four walls of your home ; let no clouds gather there : your family has one special sun—the wife. Hear what the Scripture thinks and speaks of her : “ The grace of a diligent woman shall delight her husband. . . . Her discipline is the gift of God . . . and there is nothing so much worth as a well-instructed soul : A holy and shamefaced woman is grace upon grace—And no price is worthy of a continent soul. As the sun when it riseth to the world in the high places of God, so is the beauty of a good wife for the ornament of her house.”—(Eccl. xxvi. 16-21.)

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Mother and wife she is the sun of the family. She becomes the sun by her generosity and devotedness, by her constant preparedness and readiness, by her watchful and delicate sympathy, which enable her to divine exactly what will make life happy for her husband and her children. She spreads light and warmth round about her.

APPENDIX 2

PRAYER WHEN A COUPLE BECOME ENGAGED ¹

We thank Thee, O God, that Thou hast in Thy wisdom and goodness raised marriage to the dignity of a sacrament and in this sacrament will give us help and grace to fulfil the duties of our vocation and to correspond to all its claims. For of ourselves we can do nothing. How, without Thy grace, could we attain to the holiness of the marriage state or bear with courage and constancy its cares, its trials and its struggles? How could we discharge its many and various obligations so as not to be unmindful of Thee and of our soul's salvation? Our Lord and our God, with what wisdom, goodness and mercy Thou hast acted in assuring to those who are entering upon marriage, with its great and manifold necessities, the grace of a special sacrament. We will endeavour, O Lord, to preserve that grace and to co-operate with it or if, through want of thought or through guilt, we lose it, we will pray for its return to us. May we never lose sight, O Lord, of Thy holy law and of the exalted aims for the sake of which Thou hast instituted the sacrament of Matrimony. We will spare no toil, no sacrifice to fulfil Thy holy will and to carry out Thy ordinances.

¹ It is a beautiful custom for the engagement ring to be given before the altar or a statue of Our Blessed Lady.

In order that we may persevere in this resolution and keep it fresh and vivid before our minds we will eagerly engage in all the religious practices of good Christians, that through them we may increase in holiness, be ready more and more to accept Thy grace and acquire ever greater abundance of it. Devotions and prayer, listening to the word of God and meditating upon it, attendance at Holy Mass and frequentation of the sacraments will be our constant practice,

It is Thou, O God, Who, for our sanctification and our holiness, hast called us to the marriage state and hast led us on towards it. We will strive with unwavering effort to aim at the sanctity which in Thy wise ordinance Thou hast destined for us and we will ever seek to attain it.

Such, O Lord, are our hearts, such our resolutions, such is our mind. Grant us in rich measure the grace with which Thou, of Thy bounty, hast endowed the sacrament of Marriage. Vouchsafe that we may be faithful to the vows which we will make before Thy altar and that we may be faithful to them till death does us part.





